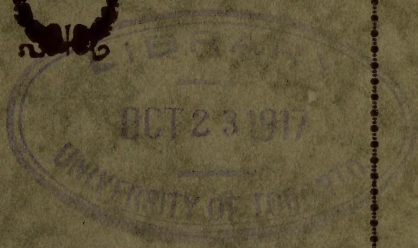


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Soul Songs

VOL. I



By
David Chalmers Nimmo

SOUL SONGS

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BY

DAVID CHALMERS NIMMO

Author of

'Nature Songs,' 'Home Songs,' 'Civic Songs,' Etc

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By DAVID CHALMERS NIMMO

DEDICATION
TO
MY OWN SOUL

As the only person I have found
In a search of nearly ten years,
To whom my poetry
Can give any interest or pleasure
I dedicate these songs,
And others that shall complete the unit
As the best and not very best of my books.
D. C. N.

PREFACE

In putting forth a seventh book of verse and the third regular classification a few words of preface seems in place.

"A book of Soul Songs would be my highest conception of a volume of poetry. It would contain in befitting form the realest utterances of the soul of man. It would be a translation out of the great heart of life when at the summit of her passion and power. It would be a biologic document written by the universal spirit and as such be the greatest page in the vast book of nature. Such books are rare. They are the ideal. Few, few in the whole history of the world can write them and just a little larger few can read them when produced."—(From preface to first edition.)

Poetry, speaking generally, is that portion of a nation's literature that is cast in the metrical forms of language. Speaking particularly it is that portion of the general product that is so marked by truth, seriousness, greatness, power, exaltation, passion, beauty, music or any other noble quality as gives it an appeal to and influence over the cultivated spirits of humanity. In some few cases a single quality in a very high degree and on a base of fair intelligence will meet the ideal and make it acceptable and preserved. In most cases the best poetry will be a combination of noble qualities all existing in a greater or less degree of excellence.

What will constitute real poetry to different persons will depend on the nature of their individuality and the education it has had in the experiences of time and place. In the arts, and perhaps in all but the physical, there are no absolute principles of demonstration, no fixed standards by which we must be judged and which can render an unrepealable decision. "Tastes differ" because the constitutional elements of human nature are ever in new measure

and new combination; hence new products and new standards of criticism are continuously appearing. Every writer must of necessity form a conception of their work according to the elements of their own being and just in the measure the universality of life in him or her shall their products come in competition with the past, be condemned by it, rival it and occasionally supercede it by new ideals.

My own idea of poetry has two or three essential elements. The subject matter is the whole universe of man and nature in all possible histories of their evolution. The spirit must be serious, elemental and passionate as life, as poetry is no plaything, spectacle or amusement. The form as drama, lyric, elegy, narrative, description or even scientific utterance is a matter of little moment provided they are equally rich in the qualities of life and thought. Thought is most universal to spirits and superiority in life ideas can alone finally make a page of poetry more valuable than a page of prose. Thought in poetry should be ever rising in clearness, truth, strength, beauty and magnanimousness. The great wise utterances and experiences of life's noblest souls, the utterance stamped with the image and superscription of eternity, the utterance that instantly domesticates itself to man and lifts the soul to a higher plane, this seems to me as the essential element of any poetry worthy of the name.

Music seems such a superficial quality to thought that it tempts scorn to place any emphasis upon it but the more poetry is studied the more vital the function and power of music appears. Perhaps it is not the original origin but poetry has certainly drawn a more than reasonable measure of her influence from this accompaniment. A poetry without music has yet to establish itself in general appreciation. A poetry where thought tends, and in certain types of mind there is always this tendency, to pass into beauty and music will always find an audience. Though music covers a multitude of sins and some

of them of a very serious character, I consider it an almost essential quality of all real song. Old Nature is the prime musician and has breathed a portion of her spirit into a portion of human utterance and Man and Time and Life calls it "good."

I once intended to write an extended introduction to the piece entitled "In The Flesh." I would have dealt with some of the interesting problems arising out of that controverted passage; but working ten hours a day as a machinist for nearly twenty years I have not been able to do the biographical and philosophical readings and thinkings that would make such a note of value. If the song is worthy of serious attention some later and abler hand will do it.

The atmosphere of this book will be called "pessimistic." It would be if it were not a presentation of the truth. Life has been no feather bed and I can see that to vast multitudes she is little less than an infinite brute. A few thoughts out of the darker reality ought not to be called "pessimistic" which is properly, to be depressed without justifying cause.

It is a pleasure to see some fifteen thousand lines that cannot find a publisher in something like a permanent form. This will be followed, if permitted, with two or three other volumes in the same classification, by "Poetry and Music Songs," "Hall of Fame Songs," "Civic Songs," "Soldier Songs," and such other work as the inner spontaneities and circumstances will allow.

January 15, 1917.

D. C. N.

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Though all can read but few can read
And fewer still can think
And fewer still are of the breed
That know the self to sink.
Unto the few, life's chosen few
That read and think and know,
To thine own kin and wisdom's kind
Go forth, my "Soul Songs," go!

First, last and best and greatest
Of earth's travailing, travailing strife
Is soul that battling matest
With her cosmic dreams of life.
Priests, poets, princes, sages
Ever cry with hunger strong:
"Soul alone the soul engages;
Give us of the soul a song!"

A WORLD SIGH

What is written has been writ.
And he that reads can read;
But until the heart is bit
To bleed and bleed and bleed
Without God or man to fit
A balsam on its need
Thou wilt never find the wit
That doth the spirit feed.

Oh Love, thou are the spirit most divine
Of all existing being. They presence fills
The universe, and is the heart that wills
All life. The green and golden globes that shine
Throughout the void are fed with living wine
From thy celestial breast and glance.
Such motions, majesty and lance
Of brightest splendors as forever kills
The undevout and prides that stream
In man, Oh who could ever dream
Such beauty, power and harmony divine
Could be and be sustained by any heart but thine!

But in this world—Oh is it here alone
Of multiplied oft million spheres that hail
Thy gifts?—thy name and nature are in veil
As if a solid starless night was thrown
Across the summer sun, and earth was blown
A course of wintry selfishness.
The elemental births that dress
Her living soul with ocean, sky and vale,
And scarce the scars upon her heart
Conceal with all their magic art,
Bear witness with their murm'ring looks and lips
Thy heart and countenance, Oh Love! are in eclipse.

Thus veiled from thee the unguardianed earth doth sweep
Her path among the constellated spheres
As if a crime among the kingly peers
Of heaven's host. To them she is a heap
Of most chaotic ruins. Within her deep
Titanic elements of life
Are locked in their convulsive strife.

What tempest wrath and lightning bolt appears!
What earthquake, Etna and cyclone
Her bosom oft has rent and thrown!
What sweeping flood, frost, drought and hungry flame
The green-embosomed earth destroy or lasting maim!

Some withering blast is on the herbless field;
Some unseen ill eats at the forest's core;
Some spirit wars in beasts and birds for gore;
Some poisons too the fountains have unsealed;
All beasts and things announce the unrepealed
Curse on the earth. From nature's heart
Without the touch and time of art
No flower or fruit reach use or beauty's door.
Why should the beasts and powers of life
Have no high end but warring strife?
Earth from her heart to splintered mountain peaks
In polyphonic voice a rasping measure speaks.

Rejections fierce to thought and her ideal
Dwells in the heart of nature and her powers.
All chemical and biologic dowers
Are driven like a blind mechanic's wheel,
Without an end, a virtue or a seal.
An infinite prolific force
Upon a blinded, blinded course,
Old Nature in her blindness fierce devours
The evolutions that might cope
Against the curse and gives her hope.
Blind in her eyes, strife swelling through her heart,
But savages and wilds are all that she can bart.

Endowered thus she swings along her course
And through the void far flings her solemn dirge;
For all she is, has been and would be, surge
Her heart and frame with deep, voluminous force
And echoes far away. These thunders hoarse
Doth strike her sister wedded spheres,
Doth fall on their harmonious ears
As discords harsh in heaven's songs emerge.
With silent awe, uncertain fears,
Each listens whence the sound appears.
Oh what a drawn-out, diapason curse
To echo from our sphere throughout the universe!

The courses long of generations courtal
Whose destiny is but to find a birth
And faith and fellowship above the earth,

Then quick to pass beyond the shadowed portal
To join the hosts forever more immortal;
What glancing eye of heart or mind
Beholds that line and is not blind
With grief, as when death falls on lover's mirth!
To see the loved and best created
With sense and self and shadows mated;
To see life's line exceeds a wise belief,
Astounds angelic ranks and burdens them with grief.

Our human nature is disorganized
From wisdom true and life is antithetic
To her best self, unto the soul's prophetic
Inspirations, to science new revised
Constitutions and all idealized
Virtues the Divine inspires
To wake and feed our best desires.
The conscience is dethroned and heretic
Sense's dark impulsive power
Is rebel to the spirit's dower.
All gifts have lack, some fulness or alloy
As failures certain make, embitter and destroy.

Yes, yes! In the far ancestral founts of life
Some mystery dark was introduced that lives
From sire to son, and unto ruin gives
God's workmanship with potencies most rife.
This strange mephitic element with strife
Has poisoned every heart and brain,
And often life's best blessing, pain.
Our quintessential essence, the motives,
From uncreated virtues bent,
And fell in that same steep descent
As primal godlike purities that fell
From heaven's right hand thrones to fire locked gulfs of hell.

Some spirit of that dark, infernal region
Seems still at work, and pours satanic power
On this descent by which they swift devour
The heritage of hope. Diverse and legion
The inspiration which she doth endower,
So each from his high destined end
And from his brother's good doth bend.
All reasonless by blind infatuation
The human bands and brotherhoods
Are severed and new multitudes
Of deadly strifes spring up each day to birth,
With power and hate and death to all of right and worth.

The world and man and life and all their powers
Are tangled up and set against each other,
And in the heart of the prolific mother
Is greed's eternal hunger that devours,
Till man stands up and in defiance towers
Above all nature's selfish seed.
He stands at bay, but see him breed
Strife in the world and with himself and brother.
Destroying strife, eternal strife
With passion drives the heart of life;
Contention and resistance ever fight
And ever rise afresh with new victorious might.

In this eternal strife is centered soul;
Though to all eyes and oft to self unknown,
Two worlds of life and death have there been thrown
For mastery. There in the darkness roll
The mighty powers that guard each moral pole
Of this dynamic universe.
All heav'n and blessing, hell and curse
Contend there oft and claim him as their own;
But most the self and gift of power
Contend or suffer or devour.
Sense and soul, might and right, real and ideal
Sweep the heart with changing woe but never lasting weal.

Oft, oft the world doth o'er him sudden sweep,
And in the strife he's plunged and far immersed;
Another soul doth in him sudden burst
And mighty powers no human power can keep
Through heart and brain with lightning passions leap.
A blinded elemental force
He sweeps along a murd'ring course
And only death can feed the burning thirst.
The swelling passions of his ire
Feeds to each heart contagious fire
And frenzied war and all she brings to birth
Sweeps on her murd'rous course across anarchic earth.

Oh war, war, war! Thou birth of selfish hate,
Destruction, death and curses upon man
And yet the end his selfishness doth plan!
Thou makest trade, all interests, persons, state
The monsters vast that each annihilate.
With heart of pride and power and greed
Defenseless weak, unarmored need
Thou gloatest o'er with eyes of murd'rous scan.

Thy armies and thy navies often seem
As nature's powers and gifts supreme,
Vast magazines a touch can disengage—
When selfishness is blind how oft they burst and rage!

What hist'ries hast thou written on the earth
Of fiery force and vengeance, blood and lust!
Oh what destroy from grandeur unto dust
Of most men are and all they hold of worth!
Which, which of long generations whose birth
Was not eclipsed by thee and thine?

Which of the years that long untwine
Was not with stain, deep crimson stain out thrust?
What nations never pained and bowed
When thee and thine together crowd?

What nations never loud, jubilant and free
When thou in chains were thrust as hell's hound ought to be?

Inhuman war! Oh most infernal birth!
Thou sure transformest earth to hell and revels
Man as drunken, mad and thrice damned devils
In blood and death, in rapine, fire and lust. The earth
Could bear the cost and count it more than worth

If thou couldst meet an equal mate
And each the foe annihilate.

All know beneath life's sun-kissed highland levels
Wars have their source and leave their stain
On lusts of pride and power and gain.

Oh war, as thou the throat of death has crammed
Thy spirit, works and lore forever deep be damned!

Still thou shalt be, for yet the nations groan
Beneath deep marshaled ranks and armaments
That public fear alone from broil prevents.
These hounds of hell if this frail leash be thrown—
Oh restrain! Restrain! Too well the truth is known!

Not yet the crimson spear and sword
Shall trim the vine and turn the sward.

The curse must be till some omnipotence
All hostile powers from power disown
And change man's heart and love enthrone.

Oh deliv'rance shalt thou ever come
Since faith is often slain and hope is stricken dumb!

And other fields than war's sore mangled dead
Their victims claim of thousand thousands slain.
These industries, all know they must remain
For human need, but who has never bled
For boys and girls on hours of labor fed?

The city's heart each morn doth bleed
To see them forced by forcing need
And early bound by slav'ry's iron chain.
The home and school, beach, wold and field
Should in and round them be unsealed.
What sacrifice for worthless heaps of gold
The azure heav'ns above and earth beneath behold?

From man's short youth until their ripest years
A hopeless labor is the law of life;
For labor without hope is but a strife
Of selfishness and death, while heav'n's spheres
Of life and love grow blind amid their fears.
The law is: "Toil! Toil! Toil, Oh slave!"
And with no end but for the grave.
If one rebels then hunger's ragged knife
Doth tear a gash straight to the heart,
Which men will see and cold depart.
No other passion like the curse of gold
Can change the warming heart to polar icy cold.

In this intense and concentrated age
Of selfishness, the workmanship divine,
Though deep defaced, bearing the workman's sign,
Is cheaper in the mart than what would gauge
The value of a beast. Horses and kine
Command a larger care than men.
Machines are under constant ken,
And often dogs are tended by a page.
Oh human life is more than cheap!
Oft hunted, murdered to the deep.
Trade's vast machine turns swifter round and round
With nought or light regard for thousands ground and ground.

Oh what a sorrow sight before the wise
As they behold the city's restless heart
And thousand thousands whose life is but a mart
For profitless exchange! Why do men's eyes
See not the throned and azure splended skies!
To buy and sell, to get and gain
Is more than all the gifts of pain,
Or all the dreams that on their visions dart.
Men sell themselves, the god in them,
His jewels their birth which diadem,
Faith, love and truth, ideals and more are sold
By hosts of human kind for worthless heaps of gold.

Wealth now is god and life's supremest art
Is but to worship her. A golden image
Is now enthroned on an exalted stage;
Her dazzling continental splendors dart
From sea to sea. Oh each remotest part
Of this vast nation's host of men,
Behold! Does not thy prophet ken
Behold the choicest spirits of the age
Beholding her low prostrate fall
To worship her their all in all?
The few that scorn the god that hosts desire
Are instant thrust again into a sevenfold fire.

Another class akin to these exchange
All gifts for public place; their all for power
And honors bright that fade within an hour.
And, many more, to wisdom still more strange,
Free barter life's estate if they can range
Where fashion, wealth and pride aglow,
Eat, drink, drive and clothe and show.
Most near to these who forfeit equal dower
Another class hear pleasure's call
And haste to drink her honeyed gall.
How many in that swift seducing round
Deem trifles but the hour and foolishness there found?

A very few like travelers in a desert land
Do seek the fountains that have ever burst
To slake the mind and its consuming thirst
For knowledge, and, the right to understand
Idealists and what their dreams have planned.
Some fewer still who seem insane
With some wild fancies of the brain
Do ever seek their finite bands to burst
And in the Uncreated find
A purity for heart and mind.
These last, the wisdom, salt and light of earth,
Though scorned and trodden down, but find the ends of birth.

But Oh this mass, this helpless seething mass
Of unconscious, blind and lost humanity!
Bereft of hope and driven on by vanity,
What are they and who cares for them? They pass
As mighty herds o'er life's scant pastured grass.
No beauty on their eyeballs blind;
No kingly thoughts within the mind;
No passionate pulse; no wisest sanity;
No love divine within the heart;

No God doth on their conscience start;
Their souls in rounds of labor, grief and greed,
Are dead to all high powers that life alone can feed.

And Life, the ancient mother of the earth
Doth breed them with inhuman inhumanity.
Are they not flung with brutal sense-insanity
Forth from the void into this mortal birth?
When thought beholds them round the crowded girth
Is she not stricken, pale, aghast,
To see the poor so crowding past
In want and grief, in blindness and profanity?
This mighty mass without an end,
Without a God, a home or friend,
Like harnessed beasts they draw the world along
And underneath all sound is their vast dirge of song.

Far, far from these, how very few of millions
Out of the mass as morning stars e'er rise
With undimmed splendor! And what a glad surprise
To find in the eternal sphere pavilions
New firmamental lights! What postilions
Upon fire! What imperial power
In their right arm! What lightning dower
Of spirit blaze from their unconquered eyes!
For each who gain a throne and crown
What battling hosts must they tread down!
But Oh how oft when on the summit's height
Life's gain is found as dross and noon is turned to night!

Around the golden portal of our birth
Glad congregate young strengths and joys and hopes,
Whose passions scorn the rough ascending slopes
Of life, for knowledge of rebellious earth
Can never pierce the consciousness of mirth.
But Oh how soon, how very soon
Beneath the height and heat of noon
The strongest faints and blind in darkness gropes!
Oh must this life forever slay us?
First a cosmos, then a chaos,
First ideals, fiery heart and lightning mind,
Then failure, nor the good, within, before, behind.

Our desecrated and dethroned ideals,
Religious faiths and joys and sacred sorrows
Unsheltered roam time's unhospitable morrows.
As solar foreigners in earthly fields,
Though with ancestral grace and royal seals,

They seek in vain some mortal heart
Wherein to dwell and free impart
What e'en the first archangel gladly borrows.
Oh what a wilderness for them!
Oh with what judgments they condemn!
High heaven's hosts come forth at birth to crown,
At sunset they are fled or on us darkly frown.

Yea worse! Love travailing in her bondage
Dost inspire the poet's soaring mind.
These splendors of her new creation blind
With most immortal imagery and now gage
Man's deep descent and his unhallowed rage.
These images the most divine,
Whose music, power and light shall shine
Though ages like the past shall be untwined,
These natures pure which recreate
Who love and live and contemplate,
These kingdoms which the smile of God doth crown
By hosts and hosts and hosts are scorned and trampled down.

The sons of genius, heav'n's celestial powers,
Life's gifts divine, hope's hierarchs of worth,
Truth's splendors rare that should enlight the earth
And guide her course to those exalted hours
They see and feel in their rich spirit dowers:
Who weeps not sorrow's sacred tear
Upon the dark and ruined bier
Of this divorce from such prophetic birth!
Their sunlike gifts, their sunlike light
Serves but to read life's line aright.
Unbalanced, driven, ruined, ashamed and cursed,
None, none but them can know how life is strange reversed.

Why is this life so lean? Why failure,
Disappointment, loss, despondency, remorse?
These spirit powers, these sorrows and this force
Of what seems immortality should insure
Careers of moral progress and should cure
The sad disorders of our state.
Vast potencies divine and great
And prophecies that through all storms endure
Are felt in will and heart and brain,
And kindle 'neath life's stress and strain.
Led on by dreams no dream should e'er deceive
Ideal worlds pass by and us behind them leave.

Why should the individual and the race
Be such fiascoes? What infinite ideal
Can justify earth's hist'ry, and repeal
The waste of human life, the gifts and grace
Of billioned souls whom chaos doth embrace?

One, only one of all our line

We dream has reached the goal divine.
His few redeemed were found where ruin reels,
A mass that plunges down the deep.

All else is failure. Oh the reap

Of death! Such harvests vast of sin and hell!
Oh the loss and bitterness, God, God alone can tell!

Oh Love! two thousand years have rolled around
Since thy high priest will sacrifice divine
Burst with effulgent brightness on the line
Of selfishness. With a swift tremendous bound
Some sinful hearts leaped to his sight and sound.

The promise long has been delayed;

Hate, greed and strife are still unstayed,
And stronger grow as each with others twine.

Still evil yet doth reign supreme;

All clearly see and all still deem

The world yet undelivered. The Christ who died
And creeds of life and love each day are crucified.

The institution of the church doth shame
Her proud pretensions. She is a black disgrace
To God and a glory to herself. Power, place,
Wealth, numbers, pomp, lore, form and fashion's fame
Are more than Christ's self-sacrificial flame;

Without a splendor full unfurled,

Within a white-washed wrinkled world,
A scorn of men whose piercing visions trace
One life in strange extremest forms.

A church that ne'er disturbs or storms

Whatever stands in Love's obstructed way,
Is the worst restraining power of her divinest day.

The high enthroned, life's purple, crowned transgressors
Of position, power, wealth and intelligence
O'er the wide hosts of helpless ignorance
Become still more the strong and proud oppressors.

The union and new acts of these possessors

Upon the new horizon's bound

Cast most portentous sight and sound.

What dark chaotic dreams will issue hence
From want and hunger's outraged sleep
If once their tempest passions leap?
The strife of life intensifies each day;
The weak are beasts of burden, the strong are beasts of prey.

The instincts pure, religious feelings deep,
Old institutional senses most divine
Now seem in strange decay. Life's darkest sign
Is that her hosts now eat and drink and sleep
With no more god than horses, kine or sheep.
No song or prayer with plea or lore
Or tear confessions upward soar;
In most no moral nature seems to shine.
The fundamental pieties
Of nature, state and families,
That virtue lent to a less enlightened day
Seem dying in the strife and slowly pass away.

A new zeit-geist has risen to control
The courses of this latter generation.
A pleasure-greed with blind infatuation
Has risen to the throne of life to pole
The thoughtless world unto another goal.
As long as thought so long is hope;
The thinker can stand up and cope
With nature and all ancient degradation;
But when the thoughtless rule the world
Humanity is blindly whirled.
This new zeit-geist doth life's worst hist'ries write
And smites with blasphemy the powers of truth and right.

Atheism, profanity and ignorance,
Pride, pleasure, falsehood and venality,
Drunkenness and foulest sensuality,
Material power and lordly competence,
Shout like dark ghouls of selfishness and sense:
"The earth, the earth is all our own
Nor God nor heav'n can us dethrone.
This is our royal day and our defence
Will blast or bless who bind or free
Our reign with more intensity.
God, heav'n and angels high are overthrown.
By bulwarked ages long the earth is all our own."

Oh Love, all things are calling out for thee!
The voice of earth and all her generations
With thunder song of mountain intonations

Is gath'ring round thy throne of victory
In intercession for the liberty
 From this bondage of corruption
 Into the glory of the children
Of God. Through time's strife and agitations,
 Though bound with adamant chain,
 Though crucified and often slain,
All things oft sing with wider echoing tones
For thy millennial earth, millennial sons and thrones.

 To men or office dare we longer grope?
Since at the height of civilization
All history, state and leading men have been
A curse and loudest blasphemies against the hope
The azure skies upon our spirits ope.
 Our politics are but a crime,
 A pestilential bed of slime,
Sowing on life thrice deadly germs of sin.
 Can honest men? Can men of God?
 Can men of conscience, truth or laud
With any wing hold office, place or power
When justice is dethroned and bribery rules the hour?

 All things now call and call alone for thee,
For time, an aged sire, bent, wrinkled, white,
But with his rich experience doth slight
And scorn all panaceas that would free
The social heart from its long leprosy.
 He has seen every generation
 With some sure cure its courses run
Then leave the world with still more deadly blight.
 No age has diagnosis sure
 And if it had, Oh could it cure?
No mortal power regenerates the heart
And all things without this but more disease impart.

 The very time's developments of power,
And conquest over nature now debate
Deliv'rance new from soul's enslaving weight
Of centenarian ill. Is this endower
For selfish ends? It doth invite the hour
 Of disestablishment to throne
 Thee over all supreme alone,
In honor, majesty and sovereign state.
 The gifts and powers of heav'n above
 Are only safe in hands of love;
In other hands a curse they must untwine,
But with thee they are safe and grow still more divine.

The discords of our unredeemed humanity
That strike despair upon all mortal ears
Ascend on high; reaching celestial spheres
There is a change, and a minor harmony
Of life's unlanguage pain is heard by thee.

Man's passion-blind and erring play

Are not to thee just what they say.

When thou translatest earthly hopes and fears

A prayer is oft in guilty deed.

We know thine eyes with sorrows bleed,

And thou can'st hear by sorrow's mystic art

The world's travailing pain as prayers unto thy heart.

Around the iron guarded gate of death

Socn gather those that crowd the portal birth.

Torn, broken, sick, and robbed of strength and mirth,

They come to yield up sorrow's burdened breath.

Each generation there forever saith:

"Oh not for me! Oh not for me!

High kingdom of eternity!

By all I wished but found not here on earth,

By life and ruin, loss and pain,

By my immortal nature slain,

By all thou art and will be in thy day

For coming generations, Oh haste, Oh haste, I pray!"

The church which thine own Christ has full redeemed,

The church which incarnates his personality,

Thoughts, passions, principles, immortality,

And the ripe fulness which the Father streamed

Into his empty form, that church has dreamed

Which joy sublime of that far age

Which promise, power and grace engage

To build on earth for lost humanity;

That church doth groan, Oh deeply groan!

Oh is it not thy spirit's moan?

Can these deep sighs which issue from thy breast

Be lost in vanity nor ever find their rest?

The first descended sons thou dost inspire,

Those thou hast sent from thy celestial clime

To hold the faith, and with glad song to chime

The golden age feel thy prophetic fire

Within their hearts. Each gathers the desire

So scattered wide in man and thing

And unto thee their sorrows sing.

Sing on, Oh poet-priests! Oh be not dumb
Unto this age of strife and gold
Though they hear not nor ye behold!
Triumphant, strong and with high heav'n plumb
Lift up earth's travailing cry: "Come, come, Oh Kingdom come!"

"Come, come, Oh long delayed and golden age!
Age of the world's unlanguage'd deep desire,
Her travailing hopes and visions that inspire
Her high, victorious hours! Age that will gage
And rear itself far, far beyond the rage
Of earth's sore disappointed heart;
Age of all song! Far age that art
The real embodiment of all life's higher
Visioned dreams which love's celestial spheres
Have rained on pain and loss and tears!
Age of divine purpose, fullness and employ,
From heaven, Oh descend and build on time's destroy!"

"Oh age, bend down and lay thy passion'd heart
Upon the nursless spirit of the earth!
Her long and wintry courses since her birth
Have frozen her forbidding the impart
That glorifies with thy celestial art.
Come! Kiss thy infant and caress,
And with thy warmth her spirit bless!
Thou crimson life! Thou pure maternal birth!
Thou warm divine self-sacrifice!
Oh bid the earth's dead soul arise!
Then through her dense, diseased, material frame
Thy all renewing life will burst forth like a flame."

"Touch thou the earth's unemancipated king,
And with the life of thy immortal heart
Oh disenthral his spirit from the mart
Of selfishness! Oh let his manhood spring
From time's long travailing agonies and wing
Unto the infinite ideal
Thou dost upon his eyes unseal!
Dethroned, plundered, profaned, enslaved, a part
Of groaning nature, unconscious,
And trampled down by beasts and sense,
His hour of soul enfranchisement be now,
And thy investiture before the morning's brow!"

"Thou hast the full resources for this life;
Thou canst destroy the hoary iniquities
Bequeathed to us by the antiquities
Of crime. Some few leaders of this strife,

Some chiefs, some towers of self, thy lightning knife
Must blast and hurl into the dust
To stay time's swift, contagions lust.
O'er the wide host thy soft benignities
And arching grace from heav'n above,
As o'er the sick a mother's love,
Can smother down time's heritage of ill
And nurse out of the earth a race that thou dost fill."

"Thou canst destroy the infernal dogs of war
And the politics of hell by which their
Course is constant driven. Panic with her bare
And hunger-bitten hordes will fly before,
And poverty be exiled from thy shore.
The brute, the brothel and saloon
Will break for good their long commune
And sink with curse to each infernal liar.
Greed, strife, crime, sorrow and decay,
Ignorance, diseases and dismay,
All, all of sin, of selfishness and blight
Shall fly before thy face as darkness from the light."

"Come thou on earth with thy exhaustless heart!
Thou hast celestial and supremest powers.
Thou hast the azure and immortal dowers
Of sun-giving heaven. Thou hast and art
The spirit pure that in each angel flowers
To splendor, joy and purity.
The nature of futurity
Doth dwell in thee and thou canst it impart.
Sow, sow thy potencies of life,
And from the very heart of strife
Another world with beauty and delight
Shall forth from chaos rise toward heaven's golden height!"

"Come! Bring the royal institutes of state!
The high, supreme, majestic, honored laws;
And kin to these those reverential awes
Thy youth and age delight to contemplate
As we behold the statues of the great.
Virtue, justice, truth and righteousness
Thy nations shall with splendor dress.
Faith, love, hope, joy, magnanimousness, applause,
Shall be the ornaments of gold
Each brow and heart shall then unfold.
Come, come, Oh, state! What business, rule and home
Thy bases shall support, enkindle shall thy dome!"

As thy rich institutions shame the past,
Bring thou the man that is enthroned on them;
The man who is his throne and diadem,
And in whom the infinite delight has glassed
His nature's passions. Oh bring him on the blast
And wreckage of this mortal kind!
Oh immortal heart and mind!
Great soul divine! Life's pinnacle! Bright gem
Of all creation! Royal mate
Of seraphim! Ripe heav'nly state
Of life and love! Hosts of eternity
Are bending from their thrones to look with joy on thee.

"Oh man divine, who would not long for thee!
Thou crowning all art with devotion crowned;
And from devotion's heart all riches bound
As blessings from the azure purity.
Thy passions with the white intensity
Of love fills every welcome birth
Of they uncrowded crowded earth.
Oh how the new created heav'ns resound
With universal harmony!
One redeemed humanity!
One human brotherhood! One family race!
One many passioned heart that one heart does embrace!"

"Come, come, Oh long delayed and golden age!
Age of all passions, purities and powers!
Age of all ideals and sublimest hours
Of execution! Oh life and love that will engage
The heightless height and boundless reach that cage
Themselves in frail finality;
Oh age of immortality
Which the fountains of the infinite assuage,
Come! Oh rise on time's foundation stones
The splendors of thy everlasting thrones!
Come thou upon the morning's golden pinions
And round the feet of God build thou thy last dominions!"

THE IDEALS

Ideals, dreams and hopes and visions,
Spirits of divinest passions,
Sunlike forms that pour derisions
On the world and all its fashions!
From our youth and fires immortal
Into being ever springing;
Through the spirit's open portal
Up to heaven ye go singing.

There within the azure splendors,
Soaring, circling, poised and glowing,
With most glorious train attenders,
Oh celestial courses going;
Ye outshine the globes so solar;
Ye are clothed in pure delightness;
Like the gods and spirits polar
Shining in eternal brightness.

Dowered, sceptered, throned, immortal,
Leading genius on its courses,
Kingly, noble, honored, courtal,
Feeding fire and flaming forces;
Dwelling on the steep of heaven,
What a beauty on your faces!
Scathless by the stormy levin,
Ye are godlike in your graces.

Light and truth and power and passion
Ye are ever on us flinging;
Life is clothed in rainbow fashion
And to heaven goes winging, winging.
As the soundings of thy measure
Fall upon the dreamer panting,
Swift upon the wings of pleasure
Soul goes soaring, chanting, chanting.

But Oh dreams divine and glorious
In thy being, form and features,
Signed by Fate to be victorious
O'er the earth and all its creatures,
Ye like all are frail and mortal;
Naught escapes the ancient blighting;
Ye and all things high and courtal
Fall before this deadly fighting.

This vast universe so heightless
Is eternal down descending.
Curse almighty, sure and sightless
All things down are ever bending.
For an "uplift" all are crying;
O'er a "fall" each heart is weeping;
Few, how few are upward trying!
What a host are downward sweeping!

Earth and man and ideals purest,
All are in one awful tangle.
Strife alone the strife endurest,
All each other slay and mangle.
Being with impassioned forces
Is forever downward drifting;
There the starry, sunlike courses,
Where the powers for upward lifting?

Sense doth mother all the nations;
Sex corrupteth every creature;
Time and Life in all their stations
Stamp it dark on every feature.
Nature's ripest, red dynamic
With a nether fire is glowing,
And the torrent flood organic
Blasting bears in all its flowing.

Want is like a power supremest
Breeding greed and strife eternal
Earth and all mankind oft seemest
Like a war of brutes infernal.
"Here is earth, it is for plunder.
Tear the life out of the masses!"
With this creed, Oh who can wonder
At the wars among the classes?

And ye dreams, ideals and visions
How could ye endure the battle
When the curse pours such derisions
On ye as on worthless cattle?
Time is but blaspheming revels
'Gainst the ideals in their passions.
Life lets loose her insane devils
'Gainst the dreams in godlike fashions.

Out of earth's old heart of motions
Comes the driving and impulses.
What are poets, dreams, devotions
To the strife that life convulses?

Dreams the greatest, gods the highest
Down the night are hurled and driven.
Life is lost. The human sighs
Through the night so lightning riven.

Gifted souls which ye created,
Priests and poets famed in magic,
For a moment high are mated,
Then lament divorce so tragic.
When Life's vision has departed
Friends and toil can hardly strengthen.
Soul and song are broken hearted
When these shadows round us lengthen.

'Gainst this flesh and blood entailment,
'Gainst time's false seducing sirens,
'Gainst all struggle, toil and ailment,
'Gainst the death that life environs,
How could ye but fade and vanish,
Swift depart or slowly perish?
Strange, Oh strange that we should banish
Those whom life should love and cherish!

First a stain from touch contagious,
Then a shadow on the glory;
Then a weight like heavy ages;
Then the "fall" so famed in story;
Then the brutal, blinded scorning;
Then the trampling on your being;
Then the beauty and adorning
Out of life forever fleeting.

On the old world goes on swinging,
Tangled in the ancient curses;
Other races come on singing
With small change the older verses.
Ideals, dreams and hopes and visions,
Out of youth the morning urges;
But old Life and Time's derisions
Change the strain to endless dirges.

*"LENORE"

Oh thou great and gifted master,
Starred and guided by disaster,
And at last a solemn wreckage
On old Death's tempestuous shore,
Thou hast sung one song of sorrow
That thy fellows often borrow
As they journey to tomorrow
Through time's ruins old and hoar,
And like all that passed life's portal
Loved the maiden named "Lenore."

Oh that radiant radiant maiden
That has come out of the aiden
Where the dreams are sunlike shining
With the glory now no more!
She is shapely, tall and slender,
Beautiful, divine and tender,
Robed with virtue, crowned with splendor,
With a face the dreams adore.
She's the daughter of high heaven
With the glory there she wore.

She is stately, queenly, courtal,
Poised, resourceful and immortal
As a ripened angel spirit
Or a classic bride of yore.
She has wealth beyond all treasures;
Round her sound great Music's measures;
Her attendants are the pleasures
That we dream beyond our shore.
Was there ever such a maiden
As the maiden named "Lenore?"

But her passions, Oh her passions
Are the mother of those fashions
That life's first created spirits
In their morning glory wore!

*Written as an exposition of the significance of "The Raven." Poe's remarkable account of its construction touches only the poetic form and dismisses "the circumstances—or say the necessity—which in the first place gave rise to the intention of composing a poem that should suit at once the popular and critical taste."

They are deep and strong and tidal,
Crimson, happy, boundless, bridal,
Great and simple as an idyll
Of old nature's wisest lore;
Growing, glowing with the gladness
And a singing evermore.

When we meet her in the morning
With divine divine adorning
There's a rush and sweep of passion
As the mountain torrents pour;
There's a waking out of slumber,
A new world above and under,
Silence, rapture, awe and wonder
As we see her pass before,
And a mighty oath is uttered:
"I would have what I adore!"

Then our courtship days and meetings,
Then our raptured raptured greetings,
As our spirits in their passions
Clasp each other more and more;
Then eclipse of every sadness,
A spring fountain flinging gladness,
A delirious happy madness
As the soul has ever bore,
And an oath of truth and honor
To the heavens bending o'er.

"Oh thou radiant radiant Maiden,
Thou has made for me an aiden
That the very gods above us
Might with passioned prayers implore.
On the future there is splendor
And around soul rich attender;
Thou hast made me a defender
Of all high celestial lore.
Thou wert sent by Fate and Heaven
To my heart that doth adore."

"Now I feel a hero's passion;
Now I wear a kingly fashion
Since enkindled by the virtue
That thy virtues in me bore.
I will honor, love and cherish,
Will defend and serve and nourish
And thy soul in mine shall flourish
As in paradise of yore.
Life will know no other glory
But to love thee more and more."

Hark! The bells are ringing, ringing,
Paeon music flinging, flinging
On the soul and earth and heaven
In a young ecstatic score.
See! A bride and groom immortal
With a train of dreams as courtal
Now are coming through the portal
Of the morning's golden door.
Welcome, welcome, fling the banners,
Ring the measures as they soar!

Then our pride and greed and senses
Slowly break our young defences
That has bound in prison fetters
That dark self in being's core.
Then great selfishness arises
That both soul and love despises
And itself supremely prizes
How e'er masqueraded o'er.
So our selfishness and senses
Pass to actions more and more.

And the Bride that was a beauty,
Whom to love eternal duty
By the selfishness so chilling
Feels a burden, blight and sore.
She is grieved by this unkindness,
Then unseen by growing blindness,
Then unfelt by sordid mindness,
Then is stricken to the core,
And the unrequited maiden
Nears the dark and draperied door.

Now a double darkness covers,
Now a double silence hovers
And the selfish soul is burdened
Like a corpse upon the floor;
But the silence is unbroken.
And the dead can give no token
And her countenance has spoken
To the conscience raw and sore,
Till at last a cry of anguish
Forth the burdened spirits pour.

"Oh forgive, forgive me, Maiden!
Oh forgive me heavy laden
With a bitterness of mem'ry
That no mortal ever bore!

I am blind and lost and weeping,
Now a tempest down is sweeping,
Now remorse is on me leaping
 Sinking teeth down to the core,
Now dark spirits ride my passion
 And like fiends drive me before."

"Oh thou blasting curse that rideth
All the earth and blindness hideth
 From this greed and sensuous passion
 And the pleasures that they pour!
Why did I forget and blighten,
So despise and dark benighten
Her the sunlike that could lighten
 To the Soul all should adore?
Oh black courses that divorces
 From the radiant maid Lenore!"

"Now with light and love departed,
Hopes all lost and broken hearted
 Soul sits down alone in silence
 And the tears can flow no more.
Till the shadow black and olden,
Icy, starless, blind, unholden,
In its darkness shall enfolden
 And sad draperies deck the door,
Soul must travel ever weeping
 The beloved, beloved Lenore."

Oh thou great and gifted master
Of one song of soul disaster
 With such beauty, truth and music
 It doth echo o'er and o'er,
Is not "life" the sacred maiden?
Is not "love" the sunlike aiden?
Is not "soul" so blind and laden
 As blasts both unto their core?
And like thee how many mortals
 Weep the loved, beloved Lenore.

THE WORLD AND LIFE

I stood upon a distant starry height
Like some observer watching in the skies;
The mighty world did fly upon my sight
Calling the soul within the soul that lies.
Up, up I came with those ecstatic cries

The cosmic soul sends through this mortal frame
When off she draws the veil upon the eyes
And feeds the dreams that set us white aflame.
I saw the globe in majesty arise;
T'was full of life, strength, action and acclaim;
Its panorama scenes were like the dreams of fame.

Mountain and plain, tree, ocean, field and stream,
Rich azure skies, clouds, birds and flowers and grass,
Morning and noon and evening like a dream
In glorious train before my eyes did pass.
Old earth was like a plastic moulded mass
And far within organic spirits warm,
Moulded divine the living dreams we glass
From poet souls entranced with godlike form.
The finished sphere, the ideal of its class,
With man and beast and bird and insect-swarm
Upon my vision swept out of the night and storm.

Forth from the earth the quick organic soul
Threw up great cities towering to the skies.
Here on the height, there on some shadowed bowl
Great masses rose that nature did surprise.
Unnumbered piles of vast colossal size,
Like habitations the elder gods might grace,
Each Campus dressed. Tower, dome and court did rise
To front and match the morn's majestic face.
They were vast structures, delight unto the eyes,
Sky steel-girt towers, great forms on nature's base,
Climbed up the very heav'ns and awed the cosmic race.

Thronging the squares, filling the miles of streets
Were citizens of towering height and frame.
Within each breast a modern passion beats
And from each head were issuing dreams of flame.
The conquering host the chaos forces tame,
Recast the globe and march rebellious earth
Straight up and on with cosmic strength and aim.
O'er nature great, in godlike form and worth,
With enginery of high invention's fame,
The imperial race ride in triumphant mirth,
Creating new the globe from center to its girth.

O'er all the world, o'er man and city's height
Was spread the robes of transcendental glory.
As round the sun are vestures golden bright,
As Greece and Rome, as dreams and exploits hoary,
Are heavy with the beautifuls of story,

So all man's works were dressed in civilizations,
Great arts, religions, literatures, and powers,
Mechanics, wealth, magnificence, gifts and stations.
Nature was changed and all that life devours
Were servants now beneath man's dominations
That shaped the world each hour with quick'ning impulsations.

Science, the mightiest spirit of all time,
Directing life, all genius and all skill,
Did recreate more glorious and sublime
Than all the dreams that poets feed and fill.
The world-soul cried with an ecstatic thrill,
High heaven rained victorious song and strains,
The future ages crowd the sun-kissed hill
And beckoned Time up from the shadowed plains.
Music and Dream, Life, Love and Truth and Will
Sprang resurrected from their blighting stains
To mount the golden thrones to their eternal reigns.

And in ascending galleries on high
Were crowded hosts of majesties and stations,
Dominions, powers and all that glorify
The heights of life and genius-like creations.
These mighty hosts with thunder acclamations,
Banners and songs and martial music ringing,
Did hail the world with high congratulations.
It was a dream, a vision on them winging,
Time's unity of scattered inspirations,
A perfect world upon their spirits springing,
No wonder there was joy and cosmic spheres set ringing.

Then, after came a vast gigantic shape,
Weary and worn, distracted, scarred and lean;
It was Life's ghost that just had made escape
Oue of the frame and masquerading sheen.
The Spirit paused to contemplate the scene
As held between despair and calm urbanity,
But memory like a wind among the treen
The passions woke of this unblest humanity.
His eyes grew dim, his heart felt anguish keen;
He muttered out in low and high insanity:
"It's all a show; a damnable profanity;
More damnable deceit and most damnedablest vanity."

DOWN AND OUT

Oh world and all ye elemental powers
Of nature! Ye titanic incarnations
Of unembodied being! Ye vast endowers
Of energy and passioned impulsations
From the great soul of cosmic circulations!
All organic and inorganic forces
Forever fresh and leaping with elations!
All breath and life from your eternal sources
Destroying worlds for greater new creations!
Vast universe upon your endless courses,
Oh listen to the song when age our youth unhorses!

Oh day and night! Ye seasons and successions!
Majestic powers whose panoramic round
Sweeps over earth as pageantry processions!
Pulsating earth whose mighty passions bound
With earthquake throes far in their deep profound!
Old ocean's vast immeasurable might
Girding the globe with thunder singing sound!
Ye mountain ranges forever more bedight
With solemnness and majesty encrowned!
Canyons, rivers, falls, forests, plains and height,
Oh listen to the song that man doth often write!

Ye wild and lawless elements of storm,
Nature's maniacs in their delirious mirth,
Night, rain and clouds with angry passions warm
That rise and drive like furies over earth!
Ye whirling winds that some convulsive birth
Sets fiercely free with sweeping rage and snort!
Ye lightning bolts black heav'n's tempestuous girth
Rains like a fire from an artillery fort!
Ye thunders vast like chaos bellowing forth
Globe rending sounds that rock each cave and court,
Oh listen to the song time's changes fierce extort!

There was a time, glorious, memorial time!
When ye were all my passion and delight.
More elemental than your own souls sublime
I found in ye the kindred of my sprite.
Like and unlike your essences so white
I felt the pulse of this vast universe,
And from the gulf of boundless day and night
Ye passed in me and did my spirit nurse.
The chaos and the cosmic powers that fight
Did girdle me, and often did immerse
In those contentions vast that war against the curse.

I was the chiefest element of life.
The cosmic passions my being thrilled nad thrilled.
Nature's fountains with measures rich and rife
Flowed into me with floods that over-filled.
Drunken, insane, delirious and unstilled,
One of nature's infinite successions,
And subject, though intelligent and willed,
To her enchantment, magic and impressions.
The reddest life her spirit ever spilled
Burst into me with impulse and transgressions
That spurned the common course, possessed by high possessions.

Ye mighty powers, my kindred and my song
I call ye now to witness to the truth!
When I was young, impulsive, swift and strong,
Did I not leave man's safe and sheltering booth?
To greet the storms that burst with fierce unruth?
When lightning deluged both the heav'ns and earth,
When thunders roared like monsters most uncouth,
When hurricanes swept raging round the girth,
Bare-browed and open breasted did my youth
Not wander forth and, centered in the dearth,
Mingled my life with thine in most delirious mirth?

Have I not climbed and traveled round and round
These azure deeps of palpitating skies?
In ocean's pure and fathomless profound
Did I not sink and another man arise?
These mountain ranges on my astonished eyes
Subdued and filled with transcendental might.
Nature's convulsions and impassioned cries
Were reproduced within my narrow sprite.
The great dynamic souls that energize
The universe with my soul did unite
And shocks and shocks of life sent through me with delight.

Oh power sublime, thou wert my element!
I lived and moved and had my life in power.
My spirit felt the touch of the omnipotent
As passions vast my being did endower.
These more than infinite energies that tower
On glorious night I loved to contemplate
And sometimes sunk out of the mortal hour
And rose into the forces that create
This glorious, effulgent, constellated bower
With momentums of eternity and fate
I yielded to and breasted till power did satiate.

But now, oh now, oh woeful, woeful now!
All I can do is sit and just remember;
A ghost of life upon time's leafless bough
Dreaming of June in cold and sleet November.
Once I was fire; now I'm a dying ember;
There brilliant flame; here but a flickering light
Before the long and black nights of December.
My youth, my strength, my passion and my right,
Are gone, all gone, and now a dying member
Earth soon will fling far down the pits of night
The cold, decaying corpse out of her living sight.

All summer long I'm worn out with the heat;
I've hardly strength to go the rounds of toil;
I scarce can stand ten hours upon my feet
To do the work that hath and doth despoil.
The wine of life, the precious, priceless oil
Is all burned up. I'm fallen down; I can't
Come back! I'm spent! I'm all in! The petty broil
For just my bread is, strife that I would scant.
Each day I drag from the exhausting moil
Too tired to think the old upbraiding rant,
But sit beside the door and pant and pant and pant.

The bright, autumnal season circles round
That once did lift unto the summits high;
Great pageantries in golden splendors gown'd
March over earth, the mountains, seas and sky.
My heart leaps up. Visions upon me fly
And mighty dreams invite the singer's song.
I fain would rise to write and often try,
But back I fall to the oblivious throng.
I have not strength; the passions flame and die;
Great poetries are only for the strong.
A leaf, a wave, a cloud, I'm swept by time along.

Winter, winter, thou overwhelming dread!
Beholding thee I'm cold and dark and sere;
An influence from the kingdom of the dead
Surrounds me like a poisoned atmosphere.
The last strength of this bowed and broken peer
Beholding thee doth almost stand aghast.
I tremble at thy coming swift and near,
For life's assassins are round thy presence massed.
I'm marked for death. I'm struck. I'm on the bier.
I always think, "This winter is my last;
Ere spring revives the flowers thou shalt away have passed."

There's nothing now before me but the "If,"
"The Great Perhaps," the vast interrogation,
The pause, emphasis and silence on the cliff
Of being as the spirit's contemplation
Stands up to scan this infinite creation.
The earth and man and all that live and die,
The splendors of night's flaming congregation,
The golden sun and solar passions high,
Eternity and blank annihilation
Now write upon the dark'ning western sky
A vast interrogation of "What?" and "Where?" and "Why?"
July, 1911.

THE OLD MACHINIST

Old Tom was a machinist.
From early youth to nigh sixty
He had worked in iron and steel and brass.
The lathe, shaper, grinder, drill and miller
Had been the realest friends of life.
With gages, scraper, file and lap
He had made many a fine machine
And could do a good job blind.
He was a "first class, all round hand"
And full acknowledged such by men
Who know what such machinists are.
"Do it in your head;" he would say.
"The job not done in the head
Can never come through the hands."
Thus he had lived, industrious, happy,
Respected, thrifty and contented
To nearly sixty.

He had three sons now reached unto their prime;
One followed him, the others later crafts.
All prospered well and as they mounted up
Old Tom was proud of them
And they were proud of him
Though still he followed,
Far more from habit than from need
The workman's round.

They wanted him to rest,
To take life easy,
To drive an automobile
And live in a new section of the city.
This was virtue, perhaps a little pride,
But from the courses and great ends of life
Blind kindness and unwisdom.

When he kept plugging on the job
They slipped a word to the new superintendent:
"He's well off; has two four families;
If any, he deserves a rest;
The day he stops we'll send him in,
'A hundred on each First.'
Just let him out, but do it kind;
He's 'Dad' and smash goes the man
That ever hurts him."

As they all had their fingers on the trade
And could divert rich custom from the shop
It had to be.

"Tom, I guess Saturday we must dissolve.
Work is a little slow.
I will have to let you out for a few weeks.
You know we must keep the married men
And families that have need;
But come around again."

Tom knew the lie, was hurt
But far too proud to show it.
He went around where he had friends
But the sons had slipped the gentle hint
And the old man was up against it.
The sons hoped that he would quit,
Take life easy and let them support him.
But Tom was part of the shop;
His only rest was there.
Forty years had done their work
And belted heart and brain
To the machinist's lot.

When he was laid off there was a heavy "strain."
A few weeks idleness
And lack of life's habitual oil
Prophesied evil.
To a seeing eye and ear
There was the sound and sense of "cutting"
When the belts were thrown on.
In about three months a cog slipped.
The machine ran on,
But when another broke, there was
The rip, rip, rip of teeth coming out
And then a great smash.
Death threw old Tom to the scrap heap.
He had committed suicide.

And I am an old machinist,
Though by my nature most unkin
To this hand toil that starves the heart and brain.
Now like Tom I'm turned to a machine.

The round is a necessity;
A day off is rest;
Two is a weariness to the flesh;
Three is a prophecy
Compelling images of dark disaster.
I see the day when I must leave the shop
And dread its coming,
The heavy heavy time with naught to do
And powers within that cannot rest.

Nature, irrational and blind,
Destructive as thou art brutal,
Remorseless as elemental,
I could wish this:
As I've no great life interests now,
No friends and none to speak to,
And never had one all my life,
As now I cannot form new intellectual habits
And now as all these swift ephemeral songs
I found and bound as healing leaves
Upon my aching heart are sung,
Ere comes that day,
Hit me with one of these drunk autos.
All I would ask is:
Do your best and quickest job!

HAMLET

The Spirit of Life

Hamlet, the play is done. At Elsinore
Thou standest now at Death's dark draperied door
To leave the earth and man forevermore.
"To be or not to be?" Is this the quest
Of earth's best mind and most impassioned breast?
Shalt thou sink down or rise forever blest
To climb the steep of this vast universe?
"Horatio, my memory gently nurse
And oft to man expound this course and curse.
The rest is silence."

Hamlet, since then, what multitudinous times
With more or less of thy world ringing rhymes
The same old play, old plot, old sense and crimes!
Yet thou art still entangled in the curse.
The Oversoul can scarcely in thee nurse
Eternity. To front the universe
Thou scarce canst dream nor to the soul report.
Both life and death are just a moment's sport
To entertain the groundlings and the court.
The rest is silence.

Hamlet, stand forth! Behold life's tragic play,
The sense and greed and little strifes that sway
The world of man and make his night and day!
Behold thyself! What most majestic scope
Of thought and action, faculty and hope!
And all for what? For this small selfish doze.
Now riseth worlds of fierce impassioned thought;
Now sorrow, grief and anguish is inwrought;
Has nought from out eternity been brought?
The rest is silence.

Hamlet, Oh what an infinite unrest
Flows, fills and feeds this still unanswered breast
When soul awakes to soul's eternal quest?
Why have we come? From whom or what commence?
What hopes and dreams and powers and passions tense,
But all so blind and tangled sore in sense!
We think and think; we question every fate;
Read sacred books; knock long at heav'n's gate;
From youth to age call, call and answer wait;
The dreamers sing; the wisest wrong confess;
The selfish sin; the virtuous pray and bless;
But after all life is a blind man's guess;
The rest is silence.

Hamlet, mark this: Another Prince we need;
Thy mind and heart but more celestial breed;
For such a soul all thinking spirits plead;
One with thy gifts but far diviner grace—
A soul that in eternity has base
And standing there shall sing out of this race
Ideals and dreams and hopes so full of fire
From our vain hearts the real divine they sire;
But till he comes, wake, quicken and inspire,
The rest is silence.

Hamlet, the rest is silence dark and deep.
It seems disturbless, unawakening sleep,
Repose divine the world doth gladly reap;
Cold silence vast on self and strife insane
That waxes sore on wounded heart and brain,
Debating still the old old old refrain.
Now fold thy hands. Breathe soft an evening prayer.
Close, close thine eyes. Sink down on nature's care.
Now slumber on. Naught shall disturb thee there.
The rest is silence.

PETER TAUGHT

"Before the cock crow this day twice,
Thou, Peter, shalt deny me thrice
 Before men all,
For thou, a stranger to thy heart,
Must first be taught just what thou art
 By fearful fall."

"Though all should Thee in fear deny,
I swear before the Lord, not I!
 One true will be.
I'll dare man's power and scorn and hate;
My Lord! My God! I'll choose my fate,
 I'll die for Thee."

"Enough! Enough! Wait well the time!
These oaths do but increase thy crime;
 But prayers prevail;
And after thou art turned again,
Oh strengthen thou thy fellow-men
 Whom sins assail!"

Oh well we know! All round the world
Has Peter's thrice denial been hurled;
 But few have learned
The living truth of Peter's fall,
Though in the hearts and lives of all
 It must be burned.

From nature's state of ignorance,
From self and all self confidence,
 We must awake.
The world and all things are combined
To quicken the immortal mind
 And moral make.

The soul unto itself must come,
Or can it be but deaf and dumb
 Unto another?
Self knowledge unto heaven towers,
And walks among these mortal powers
 As life's best brother.

"Know thou thyself!" The ancient seer
Wrote thus in letters flaming clear
 On mind and heart.

And still through sense and greed and strife
They shine before the eyes of life
Nor can depart.

We must come up, stand face to face,
Measure time's strength, and under base
This world of strife.
Can promise, power or progress be
If we are blind or partial see
The truths of life?

Down through deceptions infinite
The soul by mad experience bit
In self must sink
And learn its nature through and through,
Thought, feeling, motives and the brew
Which few can think.

Far deeper, deeper we must go
Until we find the life below;
The heart and brain
Must strike their root, sink in the ground
Until the living soul is found
That doth sustain.

Brought to ourselves, to life and God,
How few, how few are wise and awed!
The dragon's tooth
That tears us through these mortal years
Of falls, disgraces, shame and tears,
Teaches the truth.

Then to the Soul the soul can give,
Then in the Soul the soul can live
And grow more free;
Then we can triumph o'er the curse;
Then we can crown with glorious verse
Eternity.

Oh wise! Oh wise! Divinely wise
'Bove colleges or books, the eyes
That lightning scan
The nature, powers, motives and deeps
That hide within life's secret keeps,
The heart of man.

"TO THE UNKNOWN GOD"

No. 1.

Thou transcendental Spirit that doth reign
And ride upon this vastest universe,
Far, far above time's swift revolving train,
Night, want and strife and all that they immerse!
Thou Infinite, enthroned beyond all curse,
Supremely far above these travailing spheres,
Effulgencies the solar globes unpurse
And glorious dreams of philosophic seers!
Great Soul divine that travailing sorrows nurse
Out of the deep of poets, priests and peers
And infinite enthroned and worshiped in our tears.

What thou most art we know not nor can dream;
Judged from ourselves a person thou must be
From whom creation constantly doth stream
With its hard base of stern reality
And climbing souls of thought and ripe morality.
The noblest here doth shape a "Father" kind
And images of glorious immortality
As ever rose upon archangel mind
Doth sunlike rise and fill the wide portality
Of heaven. With infinite grace divined
Far, far above all worlds thou hast upon us shined.

But when we stand upon the Campus square
And round us surge the blind and driven mass,
When we behold life's endless struggles there
Of want and greed and wars of class on class,
When fronting us we see old earth surpass
All past fertility and mighty multitudes
Come hungry up upon this scanty grass,
When we behold Life's insane blinded broods
Great reason tramp even to death's crevasse
And nurse forever internecine fueds
Of blood or bloodless wars where never hope intrudes,

'Tis then the high philosophies and lore
Of poet-priests are questioned as by life,
The questions that experience has bore,
Resistless as the lightning's flashing knife.
'Tis then the glorious dreams religions wife
Seem but the hopes of love and loss and tears,
The far extremes unto this deadly strife,
Divine ideals amid the selfish years.

'Tis then the dreams with "Fatherhood" so rife
Give place to facts and these revolving spheres
But blind mechanics seem along their blind careers.

When we behold the endless generations
Forever rise none knowing why or whence
And contemplate Love's dreams and consummations,
Slain, instant slain by blind insanest sense,
When thee we call to come to life's defense
And fast and weep and bleed and vain implore
And the world's prayers and passion most immense
Fali back again into the heart so sore,
When we behold the travelling earth intense
Big, big with hope though death has deadly tore
Bring but abortion births as foul as those of yore,

Then thou dost seem a name and shadow vain,
A law, a force, an impulse, urge and power,
A blinded soul that doth forever strain
To reach the freedom, consciousness and dower
That reigns supreme on man's ephemeral hour.
Thou dost decline to that pan-physis soul
That feeds all life, that death doth swift devour,
That through the spheres eternally doth roll,
That know no pit or firmamental tower,
That equal feeds an angel, man or mole,
An endless, endless urge its only aim and goal.

Away! Away! Such lore forever perish!
There must be One transcendent and divine.
Could these bright spheres eternally so flourish
And solar souls prophetic in design
Reach up to heav'n and strike the mighty line
Of these immortal dreams that recreate
Diviner still and feed with fire and wine?
Oh tell me Truth! What change or chance of fate
Could strike this plan on being's opening eyne?
From nought comes nought. Close, close the long debate
An ail sufficient Soul behind must palpitate.

But Oh how far behind or still more high
Art thou the First that started this strange course,
Threw in the germs that change but cannot die
And swing us with omnipotential force
Around the rounds of infinite resource?
Retiring soon from being's grosser bar
What awful gulfs of darkness now divorce?
More distant than yon sightless sightless star,

Divided more than love is from remorse
Or that that is from those that never are,
Art thou the sole transcendent beyond the boundaries far!

The multitudinous suns forever roll;
The billioned globes swing in and out of life;
The worlds and ages know no other goal
Than courses dark of endless endless strife;
The generations have no nursing wife
That on their blight with rich compassions broods;
No strong right arm as like a lightning knife
Through nature cuts to stay destructive fueds.
Into the greed and struggles fierce and rife
No superhuman "Father" e'er intrudes
With acts that recreate and in his grace includes.

If often seems that thou hast made the worlds,
Rich loaded them with these potentials vast,
Then with a sweep that on forever hurls,
Swung, swung them off and off forever cast.
If often seems thou hast forever past
Up, up, and up beyond the solar height,
Beyond all care for all that here are massed,
Beyond all dreams of man and truth and right,
And there with billioned-aged archangels classed
Doth find the thought, truth, action and delight
Most kindred to thy soul and glorious in thy sight.

For here are we in endless endless strife,
In darkness lost and infinite in need,
A flash, a point, a traveling line of life
Consuming self in our eternal greed;
For here are we and though we ever plead
For help against the monsters that arise
As flesh and soul a double crimson bleed,
Old Nature blind responseless to our cries
Gives not a sign that One behind doth heed.
On, on the endless generation flies
The change is all that lives, the change that lives and dies.

These huge machines that whirling whirling flee,
Are they not drove by blind mechanic powers?
These physics and biologies we see,
Do they not ride and rule on reason's dowers?
Do not long past and black chaotic hours
Send their dynamic spirits down life's course
And each distorted monster ruling towers
And drives the earth with their ancestral force?

Of, off the vast machine with greed devours
Titanic hosts without sign of remorse
And the great world stands aghast at what thou dost endorse.

The endless generations ever stream
And flow as rivers gath'ring more and more,
These human courses eternally blaspheme
A "fatherhood" that bears with father lore.
Here just tonight I read as oft before:
"Nine millions now are starving in Japan."
A few days hence, it is the same old score
And Europe starves from some industrial ban.
Here where ripe earth opens her richest store
The price of life old Life doth anxious scan;
Starvation seems before great multitudes of man.

How infinite infinite insignificant
We are? Although we seem the crown and crest
Of ages long that point us out as meant
To climb the spheres and be forever blest
We are the last on whom that hope doth rest.
How strong and swift we enter on our term!
How bounding forth on life's immortal quest!
How solar bright the prophecies affirm!
How glorious is the path to heaven dressed!
This godlike soul, all potency in germ,
Down, down it ever goes as worthless as the worm!

Indifference most brutal to our kind
Marks nature's course, her elements and powers.
Resistless, vast, remorseless, lean and blind,
Thoughtless she brings, more thoughtless she devours.
This human too that over nature towers
More brutal is, more blinded and profane
And want and greed rule all the earth and hours,
Driving the race like herds across the plain.
Our own high passion that never fully flowers
Oft toss or wear or drive us as insane;
Down, down at last we sink as worthless worms and vain!

Worms as we are a something up doth rise,
A something great, like thee and most divine,
Out of the deep with mighty passion cries
For some great Soul to answer to its pine
And lead it forth unto the heights that shine.
Though born of earth high heaven might it crown,
The eternal years might claim it as their prize
And thou thyself with thine own glory gown.

Is man not worth an answer to his sighs!
Why do all things forever on him frown!
Down as a worm he goes, down, down, forever down!

Man is two hundred thousand years of age;
All that vast time been driven round and round
By sense and want and war's eternal rage
That makes the world one huge sepulchral mound.
In all that course he never yet has found
What soul most needs and life seeks from the tower
Against the beasts that in and on us bound,
A superhuman, intervening Power
To answer to this being's vast profound,
To purge all dross and senses that devour,
To open up the soul as morning doth a flower.

All through these long and slow evolving years
The deep and great, the noble, pure and wise
Have climbed the mountain summits of the spheres
And looked for thee with wide expanding eyes.
Far in the deeps of these prophetic skies,
Up, up the dome of solemn, solemn night,
Within the strife that round forever flies,
Deep is the soul of passions glowing white
They scanned and scanned and harkened for replies
And longed and longed for life and love and light
To come into the hour with superhuman might.

Gods are the highest dreams and hopes of man
And without such life lacks reality.
Beings like thee on thought's transcendent plan
Anchors this drifting personality
And lifts it up to conscious immortality.
Put what a loss that Life should cry: "Aroint
With such a dream! This torn finality
In life's unsuccored need must disanoint
The noble dreams that throng round birth's portality.
Life's chiefest loss is, thou shouldst disappoint
The mighty hopes of man and life from life disjoint."

In disappointment, loss and strife and fear,
Man thinks and thinks and brings new gods to birth,
New heav'ns and hells, redemptions, purgings dear,
Some casting back worse than a beast to earth
While others raise to nobleness and worth,
Men's gods are but their best ideals which they
Project above and o'er this darkened dearth

And they all change however great their sway
What time the strife convulses heart and girth.
The very gods of nations passed away
We dig out of the earth as ours shall be some day.

Gods like all things are made and pass away,
A new age comes, a new faith must arise.
The old divinities of ancient sway
Must prove themselves, descend out of the skies
And answer to the age's deepest cries.
Thou canst no more the new soul bow to awe;
Thou art not here, or hast sealed up supplies.
Life seeks but never finds great nature's law
Is ever broke but breaking all defies.
The God that stems eternal strife and maw
And saves man and the world alone can lift and draw.

Here as all stand up this crowning age
Great Science pours resources, lores and powers,
Both man and beast from bondage disengage
And send them forth victorious o'er the hours;
Here as we stand clothed with these godlike dowers
From nature shorn, the world we subjugate
And most sublime ride round and azure towers
With conquering skill, triumphant and elate;
Here as we stand the morning's golden bowers
Invite us forth to mount the highest state
That man has ever known from his long dateless date.

But often Life tears off the thin disguise
Of science, wealth, magnificence and estate
And thoughtless man to "thinking" doth arise
And silent stands the truth to contemplate.
We're up against a blind colossal fate;
The world and man in anguish bleed and bleed;
Life cannot stand straight up beneath her weight;
The sphinx still on the ignorant doth feed;
The lines of man and destiny so great
No wisdom yet the sentence vast can read;
Life's tangled in a curse that nought has ever freed.

Thus doth the soul like nature's pendulum
Swing all extremes of doubt and hope and fears:
Oft weeps with joy, oft stands aghast and dumb
And often gropes the way so blind with tears.
Both good and bad, frail creatures of the years,
We pause and think, incline unto the right,
Would sense forego, follow the wisest seers,

Suffer all pains and stand against the blight
If we could find some helper from the spheres.
But when for life with nature old we fight,
Noné, none delivers there, the mountains crush the mite.

Thou unknown Source of transcendental power
That made the spheres and into them unpurse
These elements of cosmic life and dower
That prophesy but never seem to nurse
The ends divine the awful strifes immerse!
Thou infinite and everlasting urge
That drives and peoples this vast universe
And doth not rise to purify and purge
The remnants of the ancient ancient curse,
Blind, lost and worn and driven like the surge
Life moaneth up to thee her old old prayerlike dirge.

As oft before, and as by Athens then,
The Soul, as since, upon the world's highway
Doth pause and scan the stain and strife of men
And questions straight the oracles of day:
"Whence, what and why and whither do we stray?
Why dark and lost and driven far abroad
And like a toy with which the world doth play?
Is this great soul a guilded guilded bawd?
Is there not One on whom our hopes can stay?
From such a One why are we so outlawed?
Where is the infinite, eternal, living God?"

"Why are we treated worthless as the beasts?
Where are the thrones of prophets, priests and seers?
Why deaf and dumb and blind unto our suits
As on us roll the curses of the years?
The instincts of our being, hope and fears
Conceiveth One high o'er the empire broad
And unto whom the spirit blind with tears
Doth bare itself so needy, frail and flawed.
Though none respond from far above the spheres
Beside this shrine the soul again is awed
And silent worship lifts, "To thee, the Unknown God."

DECEPTION

"The world converted in this generation!"
How dark thrones deception and elation
Cast on bright minds though by the ages taught!
Sublimest truths in splendor they enshroud,
And rainbow lies gleam from the bannered cloud

As to allure the princes of high thought
From truth, to sound a vain and moment's boast
And with such hopes deceive the sacramental host.

Could aught but dream, or night's distempered brain,
Or reason tott'ring on her throne insane,

Or dotaged mem'ry, murm'ring of her youth,
Rave of the church's power to save the world?

Could aught but hell's infatuation, whirled

On by the falsest spirit of untruth

Through some dark night, or solid-coned eclipse,

Deny the light of heaven and truth on Life's own lips?

Oh first deceit! The last and darkest birth
Of night's unfathomed gulf has sprung on earth,

And blinds the eyes of her high prophet race!

What spirit speaks? What charms of death infernal

Thus veil our eyes from life and truth eternal?

Oh thou divine, majestic splendored face!

Oh countenance of pure effulgent light!

Dost Thou still shine on earth before our mortal sight?

Great Light of life! High Spirit like the sun!

Today undimmed as when time first begun

Thou rollest forth a flood of living splendors.

One moment in thy presence, when the light

Bursts from thy soul in its effulgence bright,

Reveals the dark and all its hid attenders.

Then once again descend from heights above

And undeceive the heart with brightest beams of love.

But not unto this dark and sinking world

Of hoary crime, whose populations, whirled

On and blinded by the driving storms of

Greed and strife and death, beholdest not thy face,

Oh not to these the splendors of thy grace

Reveal! For thy own radiant form of love

Was crucified and nailed toward heav'n in scorn,

And be as once again, again it must be borne.

But on this church, whose long delusive dreams

Of fitful, phosphorescent paleness gleams

Like morning lights of golden purity

Upon their blinded sight, oh now unburst

The brightness of thy being! From all immersed

In sleep of sin which pure lights never see,

That light will drive false dreams with swift surprise

And burn new visions deep upon the spirit's eyes.

Oh what a sight for heaven's new-opened eyes!
Against thine azure purities arise
A million forms of ebony selfishness.
This worst of all disease upon each face
Of impassioned power doth daily trace
Prophetic signs no mortal can suppress.
Who can behold these signs which strong men tremble
And life and light and truth to his own soul dissemble?

Where is the image of heav'n's eternal king
Of beauty? Where are the dazzling lights that wing
From faintest sign of his all perfect form?
Where is the faith? Where is the golden speech
Of prayer? Where are the flaming songs that reach
The broken heart of sorrow? Where the warm,
Pulsating and all vitalizing love
That sacrifices all in acts like his above?

Behold those brows! Tragic, prophetic faces,
Where sin and her unconscious guilt entraces
Lines to God the most unlike. Behold how pride
Lifts up each countenance with scorn! How hate
And lust and greed and pleasure satiate
And cruel ambition, how they all are dyed
In colors of their own lean hearts, no less
Than of the murdered heart of murd'ring selfishness!

Dark discontent, rebellious unbelief,
O'er shadowing fear and low consuming grief
Dark curtains draw when darker things have play.
Hosts of dishonored vows and with'ring scorns
Of truth and love the Christ again enthrone
With greater guilt than that dark-annaled day.
By deeds, not words, another Calvary
Of his and their own souls the prophet eyes can see.

Beneath these forms, what mockery of life!
How cold and still to that eternal strife
Grace doth sustain with all the powers of sin!
Oh what celestial poles from love divine,
That lives and works with Calvary's glorious sign
Of pure self-sacrifice of all within!
How strange to life! How like to death! What dreams
Of doubt and scorn and fear a granite charnel streams!

Behold these lives! How fair! But under, leprous
And eaten deep, till like an ulcerous
Moving mass of worse than putrid death

Upon itself and all things that are round
Contagion flows; while living germs abound
Both near and far. A deadly laden breath
Upon this mortal struggling mass is blown,
And millions die from those who should the life of life have sown.

Can such a church convert the world to Christ?
Physician heal thyself! Heav'n's balms unpriced
Scorn heathen souls while thou diseased so art.
The wise will say: "The world 'within our day!
Or convert the church! The frame must stay
Upon a vital rich sustaining heart."

The very wise: "A converted church must wait
A converted ministry, and that, a professoriate."

JUST A HANDFUL OF DUST

No. 1.

Oh the rapture divine and delirious joy,
Measures nearly insane that their beings upbuoy,
And a pageantry train of the dreams from above
In their rainbow adorning and lyrics of love,
When the cloud did depart and they welcomed to earth
Spirit fragile and fair as a flower in its birth!
As they lean and admire, as they feed the keen glance,
See! The joys are in tears but in gladness and dance
And the fountain of life in its mounting and glow
Is as sweet and as swift as the fulness and flow.
But the anguish and pain of the heart and the brain
Did the morning destroy and did drive them insane
As they held to their breast
And wept sore as they pressed
Just a handful of dust,
Just a handful of dust.

Like a dream of fair dreams, like a beauty divine,
Like a joy of the heart, like the seraphs that shine,
Was the maiden so pure, was the passion so high,
Was soul atmosphere quick, was the voice, hand and eye.
Wise, resourceful and deep, yet most simple and great,
Just a love for Romance in her glory and state,
Just the soul that all men but the one she doth draw
Stand afar and uplift the pure worships of awe.
None beheld but to love, none did love but to praise,
None did praise but believed her immortal in days;

But the blast and the blight ere her first bridal night
Blew a poisonous breath on her being so bright;
And all Life, Love and Dream
Wept to wind and to stream:
"Just a handful of dust,"
"Just a handful of dust."

He was strong as the sea and the mountainous rocks,
Iron muscles and nerves for the earthquake and shocks;
In stature a giant, in thought, action and fire
He would shoot to his ends with the swiftest desire.
From the base of the earth to the heights of its thrones
Rose the soldier and sword that the world ever owns.
Nearly Nature herself he did trample and break
As he fought through the strifes that the planet did shake;
But she loved him the more and resources and power
More freely bestowed on the god of the hour.
But behold him and fear! See! His throne is his bier
And an icy cold corpse crowns the crest of the sphere.
And the World sweeping by
Merely mutters a sigh;
"Just a handful of dust,
Just a handful of dust."

Now, Oh harken and hear! There's a glorious sound
Through the discord and strife on the spirit has bound.
There's a lyrical soul mounting higher and higher,
It has captured the heart of all beings' desire.
There're measures and strains like the birds and the flowers,
Giving beauty and glory and fame to the hours;
Now the choruses burst like the dawn of the day,
As the sun going forth on his azure bright way.
There are marches and paeans like soldiers that shout
When liberticides flee and the curse is in route.
All the World, Life and Time, Man, Greed, Struggle and Fear
Are enchanted and charmed to the height of the sphere.
But alas, Oh alas! It is stayed. He is cold.
And the dirges or sorrow around him are rolled.
When eternal the strain
Is the heart and the brain
Just a handful of dust?
Just a handful of dust?"

Hear the Soul crying out: "I arise and I soar,
Think, conceive and create and admire and adore.
Sure I scepter the morn and doth guide the world's way,
Giving creeds and the laws like the God of the day.
I am armored and charged with the sciences wise
Like the center round whom the rich universe flies.

For the ages I think and I plan for all earth,
An infinite fullness I am just in my birth.
I'm—Great God! What is that? A thick darkness and cold
On the earth and the day and my spirit is rolled.
I see it. I feel it. Now my blindness is past
And the man and his globe is remorselessly cast
 To the night and the grave
 And oblivion's wave,
 Just a handful of dust!
 Just a handful of dust!"

Just a handful of dust, just a handful of dust,
Into being and life out of nothingness thrust.
Long it rolled and it grew into plant, bird and flower,
Then to spirit it climbed with an infinite dower.
See, they ride on the suns and the planets and moons
With the glory of night and the splendor of noons!
They create the high visions the sciences soul,
Giving hope to the world and the ages a goal.
With their feet on the earth and their heads in the skies
Most eternal they seem and forever should rise;
But a wink and a touch and a cry and a flash
And the worlds and their hosts into nothingness dash,
 Turning back on their course
 To their low primal source,
 Just a handful of dust!
 Just a handful of dust!

DUNG

Oh War, dread War! Dark, dark prolific curse!
Survivor of the long eternal strife!
The parent soul that doth forever nurse
Black murd'rous hates against the heart of life!
Thou tramplest down, thou plungest deep the knife
Into the soul of every human hope.
In spite of all time's changes rich and rife,
In spite of man who struggles up the slope,
In spite of all ideals sorrows wife
Thou risest up, blaspheming heaven's cope
And feedest all the race thy deadly deadly dope.

Full drunken with thy wine of inspiration
The ancient beasts within these humans rise.
Man is transformed; a cursèd incantation
Makes savages and brutes of monstrous size
And by the spells infernal energize.

Drove as by hell, insane or madly stung,
With fierceness hot and fell ferocious cries
All have themselves upon each other slung
Till mangled dead in slaughter round them lies.
Great Life and Hope and all unto them sprung
Cry on the insane scene: "Dung! Dung! Just common dung!"

See these high forms, the high high forms of man,
The God erect, the hopes that earth doth nurse,
So rich endowed unto a cosmic plan
And marched unto a cosmopolitan verse—
Now see them brought before this blasting curse
And cheaper than the breeds of savage tongue,
And vainer than the shadows that immerse
And ruthless as old Nature ever flung,
And quicker than the lightning can unpurse,
And worthless as the beasts around them sprung,
The royal race of man, dung, dung, just common dung!

These spirits vast which hope brings unto birth,
Potentials rich the world doth travailing nurse
Out of the black and blind chaotic earth
To victory and virtue o'er the curse,
These solar souls that splendors bright disperse
And wear the robes that heaven on them hung,
They strike the eye, a god they rich unpurse,
They tower and shine as from immortals sprung
And front the height of this vast universe;
But war makes man the vilest ever sung,
All that he is and does, dung, dung, dung, just common dung!

Life brings them forth in anguish torturing pain,
She treasures them beyond all treasures bought,
Doth feed and clothe, guide, nurture and sustain
And gives all strength that they be virtuous taught.
All art and skill and craft is in them wrought
And out of nature's chaos blind and stung
They bring the cosmos life has ever sought,
These civic states, and high in heaven hung
Prophetic dreams unto the future's thought.
Then see it all in blindest slaughter flung;
Mankind, his world and work, dung, dung, just common dung.

Life brings them forth and Oh the joy divine . . .
When e'er is found a spirit strong and great,
A thinker and an actor with design
To carve and build the nobler virtuous state!
These souls are sent the world to elevate
And bear the gifts to which the heavens clung;

The geniuses still in the world create
The worlds divine that are or e'er are sprung
And lift mankind to meet and match and mate;
But consternation upon our eyes is flung,
The geniuses of life, dung, dung, just common dung!

Great man that crowns these travailing evolutions,
The man that thinks these systems of ripe thought,
That round him builds these glorious institutions
Of social life and visions he has caught
From heaven's thrones and unto mortals taught,
Great man and all the greatness from him sprung,
The hopes and dreams with life and passion fraught,
The nobleness that sorrow out has wrung,
The honor and self-sacrifice so sought,
The crest and crown that life has ever sung—
Behold! Behold! Behold! Dung, dung, just common dung!

Dung! Dung! This great humanity naught but dung!
A product rich just brought to fertilize
The barren earth and in the furrow flung
Like vilest things whose swift decay supplies
Another life that in earth's bosom lies!
The very race from whom the heav'ns are sprung,
The forms divine from which the thinkers rise,
The hearts and minds so grandly great when stung,
The consciences with god within their eyes,
The passion white and dreams so glorious sung—
Behold! Behold! Behold! Dung, dung, just common dung!

Oh man, Oh man! When unto reason wed,
When wisdom ripe and virtue in thee streams,
From out and unto heaven thou art led
And far behind and far before there gleams
Faiths, hopes and joys and sunlike golden dreams.
Then thought must think that this mortality
Is but a mask that veils a master's schemes,
And birth and earth a mere portality
To being high and empire that redeems,
For thou dost pass in high courtality
To this vast universe, to glorious immortality.

But when, Oh Man we see thee in thy strife,
When thou art plunged and passionate in war,
When thou art armed with lightning bolts and knife
And slaying all, thyself as red in gore
As butchery and slaughter ever wore,
Then by despair Life is most deadly stung,
Wisdom and truth are trampled as of yore,

Hope is torn forth and far with curses flung,
And night is poured on all celestial lore.
Then Life and Time must sing as often sung:
"Dung, dung, just common dung! Dung, dung, just common dung!"

Nature, thy hand again put to the plow
And shove the shear down to the granite rock!
From end to end of ancient empires now
Turn down the dead that all the ages shock!
With them into that fertile bosom lock
Some few ripe seeds of life's diviner state!
With this rich cosmic fertilizer frock
The vital germs, and out of them create
Another world whose human kind shall flock
Around great Peace and harvest from our hate
The rich millennial dreams the ages long to mate!

DRAGONS

Within earth's passioned, palpitating breast
A spirit lives and forms the plastic mass.
Power, life and thought in all ephemera dressed
Reveal some soul that these but faintly glass.
At epic points she mounts the spheres
To note the progress of the years;
All, all the past unto the hour
Doth pierce and test with lightning power,
Forever looking to that light
That sunlike shines upon the height.
Blind life and thought, at times she does not grope,
Stands forth like Reason's soul and views the world with hope.

Long ages past, when dinosaurian forms,
Repulsive monsters of gigantic might
Did people earth, and bred tempestuous storms
Around them fierce as tropic stormy night,
Upon the scene she rose to see
What was and from it what might be.
The earth was all one blinded brute;
As was the root so was the fruit;
Great nature's forms on land and flood
Was all one strife, in death and blood.
She sighed and sighed upon those births of time:
"Just dragons, dragons, dragons! Just dragons in their slime!"

Again she rose. Huge monsters had no place
Another form rose with erected shape,

Just languaged and beginning to uncase
Those mighty powers transforming man from ape.
Fierce was he as the beasts of yore,
As naked, hairy, hungry, sore.
She faintly smiled. There was a hope
That out of this a soul might grope,
And language nurse the thought and dream
That in her far off heart did gleam,
But sinking back she murmured her old rhyme:
"Just dragons, dragons, dragons! Just dragons in their grime!"

Again she rose. The shape erect had thought;
Prophetic lights were shining in his eyes;
Great cities rose; new aits were learned and taught
And gardens, fields and flocks and herds they prize.
She more than saw. It was old strife
Though in the masquerades of life..
Men fed on men. It was the past
In new deceptive figures cast..
Straight from the monsters of the flood
The world had left a path of blood,
She sighed and sighed and sorrow filled her rhyme:
"Just dragons, dragons, dragons! Just dragons in their prime!"

Again she rose. Earth was a royal sight,
Ships, railroads, towers, schools, churches, light and thought;
Great humans with a towering front and height
On nature rode and vast inventions brought.
"Twas our own age, the modern world
With hope's prophetic flag unfurled,
But Wealth and Liberty and Science
Each other blast with death appliance.
Some thirty millions mangled, dead,
And life on blasting curses fed!
She wept and wept, slow sinking back in time:
"Just dragons, dragons, dragons! Just dragons in their crime!"

RESURRECTION

I wandered forth one dawning Easter morning
Mid resurrection dreams;
Divinest hopes all sense experience scorning
Held fast the prophet's schemes.
I saw the earth, the fresh old earth that treasures
The myriad dead of generations old,
And dreamed that life's omnipotential measures
Would magic work and bring them from the mould.

I thought to see forth from Death's marble portals
The mighty dead come forth in high array,
Erect and tall and bright as young immortals
To front the dawn of an eternal day.
I watched and watched when down the morning golden
Into my dreams a spirit bright did glide;
Silence was called and clarion voices olden
Upon the hour in noble song did ride.

"Vain, vain, Oh vain these fleshly resurrections
As told by prophet seers.
They are but dreams, desires and sense projections
Out of love's loss and tears.
The boundless soul within the vast creation
With endless urge forever overflows
Forms myriads of briefest incarnation
And feeds them with her white impassioned glows.
But Oh how swift the multitudinous members
Flash, burn and blaze out from and into night!
A moment's pause, and from the dying embers
Another lives and leaps into the light.
Nought, nought abides; succession holds the courses;
The one remains; the many pass away;
None, none return; new mingled are the forces;
The one alone has resurrection day."

"Though no archangel trump and train attending
The dead bring from their tomb,
Though Death shall reign, no living God attending
To break the iron gloom,
Despair thou not but front this vast creation!
Stand up in strength like all the great and wise!
Clothe thee with calm and virtuous domination
And look the cosmos straight into the eyes!
Resurrection has been a truth eternal;
Her life had fed time's high impassioned dreams:
The great world-soul in majesty supernal
Has lived and wrought her resurrection schemes.
Through all the spheres the cosmic life is flowing;
'Tis bursting through; 'tis climbing with desire;
Time's present form this life is swift outgrowing;
The central soul forever doth aspire."

"Long, long ago, long ages without number
The globes were rude and raw.
Almighty storms that never ceased to slumber
Did chaos drive and draw.

But in the strife and infinite contentions,
Long overborne by fierce destroying force,
The world-soul dwelt and impulse and ascensions
Forth from her went till strife far ran its course.
Then chemistry, great nature's first mechanic,
To being rose and to the formless mass
Division gave and lawed the inorganic
With wisest lore that Science cannot pass.
The elements were fixed and subtle virtues treasured,
The simple forms grew more complex and high,
And now and then a dream diviner measured
From matter sprang and far above would fly."

Through geologic and mechanic ages
The soul was penned below.
It struggled oft as spirit still angages
With passioned flesh as foe.
Long, long the great pan-physis soul was smothered;
Then came the hour, a biologic germ
Rose to the light and was divinely mothered
Though but a faint and protoplasmic worm.
It bore the strife; it gathered power and passion,
In earth and sea against odds did prevail;
With changes strange in elements and fashion
It climbed and climbed the biologic scale.
From plant to beast, from plane to plane it mounted;
Thère, there behold! It stands straight and erect;
A human shape and though by us discounted,
Upon that morn prophetic and elect.

"Was not that dawn a resurrection glorious
When language first was born,
When the great soul upon her way victorious
And though by passion torn
Found in the bursting worlds within her being
An instrument that would each other mould
And more and more each other bring and freeing
Would base and build as hopes have never told?
The worlds of thought within the mind unlocking;
Fire kindling fire as soul to soul did speak;
Visions and dreams like morning spirits flocking,
All calling man to mount to being's peak.
Great glorious strain! Oh language most immortal!
Thou seemst like a heav'n descended nurse
And resurrected man kingly and courtal
Grew more divine and rode upon the curse."

"As language nursed the spirit of the thinker
Thought nursed the dreamer's dreams.
Life poured her wine. Man was a thirsty drinker;
Soul with new visions teems.
Great Liberty, a spirit pure and primest
Rose up in man and made him great and wise.
The free born thinker ever stands sublimest
Of all that is or that can hope to rise.
The ancient forms that moulded life in classes,
That drained off these and fed those to be great
Are shattered now and now the world wide masses
Dare think and act and join in life's debate.
Wise thinking power, slow product of the ages,
Is mother of that liberty all sing
And Liberty and Reason still engages
The heart of man and upward lead and bring."

"Behold today! Earth shakes and shakes with passion;
The world is white with fire;
Off casts the past, reclothes in nobler fashion
As Science doth inspire.
Vast structures rise none ever dreamed in vision;
The sea is ruled; great cities mount the skies;
New crafts and arts and exploits pour derision
Upon the past that to oblivion flies.
The world-soul moves to conquest and dominions;
Great nature gives lore, power and vast resource;
Man mounts aloft; he rides on eagle pinions;
It seems the dawn of an immortal course;
Greatness doth call and clothes him with her glory;
Electric streams into his bosom flow;
Our day and deeds could point an epic story;
Man mounteth up with resurrection glow."

"And shall there not be future resurrections?
Does this exhaust the soul?
To being's height, her glory and perfections
The dream shall ever pole.
The dreams already sail in living splendor;
A social virtue, justice, truth and right,
With humanity, a glorious train attender
Shall rise and rule and spread their life and light,
This godlike soul the senses blind imprison
Shall some day come forth from the strife and greed;
A million times this impulse has arisen,
The billionth time delivers life and breed.

Man shapes the world but man far more she fashions
And the great soul that moulds the plastic mass
Shall ever rise in higher form and passions
And incarnate the dreams the heavens glass."

"As in the one so in the mass earth's fountains
Burst with volcanic powers;
Life come a flood; we rise unto the mountains
Clothed with supremest dowers.
Behold how education makes the master!
Ambition brings another all on fire;
Love finds within a treasured alabaster
That perfumes life and feeds it high inspire.
When soul stands up to front the vast creation
A vaster still springs in him with a bound.
When man meets God and finds his right relation
A mightier soul within the soul is found.
Then up there springs a more than earthly passion;
Then doth he feel a more than mortal power;
Upon him sits a kingly godlike fashion
Upbuilding soul to heaven's azure bower."

"Man at his best of thought and purity
Doth front the great 'To be,'
Doth sympathize with that futurity
Across Death's darkened sea.
He weds and finds in vast eternity
A base for thought, for action, faith and hope,
And she, like some divine maternity
Doth lead him forth to mount up being's slope.
Infinity, the finite so surrounding,
So native seems the spirit's atmosphere
All life and love within the mortal bounding
Delights to view an endless high career.
Who dare deny when man has passed these portals
And this machine shall in the dust low lie
A resurrection spirit clothed immortal
Shall rise and soar forever in the sky?"

Thus sang the dream unto the old traditions,
Unto the slumb'ring dead,
To this new man, unto the strange conditions
The sciences have bred.
Then as the shining dream and cosmic measure
Slow faded off my hungry ears and eyes
A sorrow fell upon the moment's pleasure
And from the deep a smothered moan did rise:

"Oh generations vast that roll your numbers
With fire and force across this narrow breast,
If ye lie down in blank unconscious slumbers
That even dreams can never more molest,
Why did you live, why brought from nought to being,
Why God enriched, why swept upon your way?
Yourselves, your words, your deeds and all so fleeing
Seem questions vast that front both night and day."

THE CENTER OF GRAVITY

When we are young and fed from nature's fountains
Life's foaming streams burst into us so strong
We feel the swift momentum of the mountains
And gathering tides of sea-ward sweeping song.
On, on we drive; no floods can leap along
Like youth's desire and ardours swift and bright.
The rush and surge and madness of life's throng
We leave behind, and bounding passions white
Outstrip the world's contagious fear and wrong.
We're saddled, loined and breasted with delight;
Crowned, crowned with crimson life and fed with purple might.

The sense and strength of new born consciousness,
A pressure seems that now and then doth burst,
The powers of life that being strain and stress
Are not enough to feed the burning thirst.
We outgrow earth and rising unimmersed
Up through the strife and selfish murd'ring stains,
The highlands climb with hope divinest pursed
And hear and sing great paeon flinging strains.
We crown the world; we king it though it nursed.
Colossal pride looks down upon the plains;
Ambition with delight views empire's vast domains.

Right down our feet, straight up through heart and brain
The axis go that swing the mighty world.
Cities and states, man, beast and all life's train
Around this self are daily circling whirled.
We stand up straight. With sword and flag unfurled
The elements are fronted with defy.
Upon all things are final judgments hurled
And round this self the age and empires fly.
The universal center, all is swirled
Of life and time, of earth and sea and sky
Around the orbits cast by youth's gigantic "I."

Youth is Life's transcendental egotist.
There is an infinite, unquestioned weight
Of emphasis on "me." An optimist
Of "My and mine" he fronts resistless fate
And scorns her powers so calm and strong and great.
Godlike and tall, balanced and plumed and strong,
He stands in life the center of all state
And all her powers and persons round him throng
With homage, praise and honors that elate.
He rules the world. To him the thrones belong.
He crowns himself as king and listens to the song.

But as we age and philosophic years
Doth climb and measure this vast universe
All blinded pride dethrone they off the spheres
And nature's truths unto us stern disburse.
What are we then? The large immortals that unpurse
Significance to these transcendent spheres?
The mighty souls that ride upon the curse
And sun-clad rise out of this vale of fears?
Are we the kings of glorious deeds and verse
To match and mate the geniuses and peers
That crown high heav'n's height and ride the eternal years?

We are the last of biologic forms;
Kindred to beasts; with reason lightly graced;
As valueless as the ephemeral swarms
That fog and fen a moment's course has traced.
Great nature has so little on us placed
That prophets high, man, beast and bird and worms
Into the deep are driven, hurled or paced
Without a thought to reason, truth or terms.
One ruthless law all being has embraced.
Thought stands aghast. Destruction loud affirms
In neither man or beast are worth preserving germs.

The universe doth round us ever roll;
Unto the astronomic globes and years
We are the same as to some sunlike soul
The insectivorous breed that disappears.
Time's brief ephemeramorphs—the spacial mere's
Prolific animalculae—the low
Protozoa—the smallest psychic spheres
And infusoria no miscoscopes can know—
Are we not such to the eternal peers
That center must this vast processional show
And watch the constellations rise, splendor, fade and go?

Are not the wide, impassioned, high and deep
Oft lifted up by life's dynamic soul
That fills the universe? When in the sweep
Of those vast cosmic energies that pole
This mortal with the spirit of the whole,
What then is man? How frail and swift and brief?
How mentionless upon the solar scroll?
Merely a speck, a flash, a sound, a leaf
Among the spheres and aeons long that roll!
A puff of wind, a breath of guilt and grief
A bubble that doth burst, and gone, gone beyond belief!

The mighty worlds swing on their evolutions
And like great emery wheels of swiftest flight
Their elements in endless revolutions
Throw off as brilliant, bickering sparks of light.
Off, off they go with passions heated white,
But swifter far than thought can ever think,
Far deeper than the deepest darkest night,
As silent as the gulfs beneath the brink,
And lost, Oh, lost as death blots out of sight,
Life's flaming sparks of pleasure, strife and swink
Down, down the darkened void, glow, flicker, die and sink.

"YOU HAVE NEVER SUFFERED"

I have not suffered, never wept;
I have not known the griefs that kill
When gold and health afar are swept
And die the hopes that youth doth thrill?
I have not known the bitter ill
When cradle angels far have flown,
Nor when her soul our own doth fill
Is root drawn out with stifled groan
And leaves us years and years to moan and moan and moan?

Yes? I have suffered. I have wept.
Strife once my being did baptize,
The night o'er my warm bosom swept
With fiercest storms that black did rise.
In life the deepest loss still lies
To love the best but sunken deep
In earth to have no strength to rise;
To lose the dream and this to reap
Is such a state of grief as few of mortals weep.

Eclipsed was all my morning light;
The stars and moons and suns of gold
Did dash no gleam through day or night
And hope did not a ray unfold.
To triple blackness I was sold;
The nights of sin and death and hell
Their mantles round my soul did fold,
From nature, God and man there fell
Egyptian night and plagues no mortal tongue can tell.

Alone, alone, Oh, all alone,
Alone from all the universe
I staggered through the strife unknown,
Wrapped in the ancient, ancient curse
When being's powers most full unpurse.
Within the chaos so immense,
So vast with powers and growing worse
And driven on by storms intense
I was stone blind to man and all the world of sense.

I oft have prayed for hours and hours
Till bone and breast and heart did ache.
Through darkest night in lonely bowers
The ear of God I tried to wake
By calling: "Mercy!" "For love's sake!"
"Oh Father save!" "Give hope a staff!"
My groans strange echoes then did wake
As if some demons wine did quaff
And mocked me in their drink with mad delirious laugh.

I oft have wept, not rainbow tears,
Those mortal wounded hope may bleed,
Or dark despair in her last fears;
The very drops remorse doth feed
To slack the conscience's burning greed;
Tears glowing white and spiked with pain
As twisting tearing bullets speed,
Shot from my heart with fearful strain,
Through aching, aching breast and hand enclaspéd brain.

My mind was like a serpent's nest
Where beast with beast did fiercely wrangle.
My noblest thoughts with godlike crest,
The baser griped and strove to strangle;
But these with bright death anger spangle
Oft conquered them. Strife, grief and stains
With all the woes that sins entangle
Did sweep across my spirit plains
And caused such agony as cannot now have strains.

My heart was often like a hell
And feeling like her fiery waves.
Such storms of wrath and darkness fell
As round her shores forever raves;
The "steep washed gulf" and deepest caves
Were dashed and swept, and soul was borne
Over the crimson crested graves
With hated, vast, majestic scorn,
Here and there, around and round and torn and torn and torn.

An ancient curse enwrit with fears
Doomed o'er me night of blackest fate.
My soul bare nerved has lived for years
With anguish as my only mate.
Remorseful serpent thoughts with hate-
Full tooth and fangs upon me came.
Fire hailing clouds and thunders great
And furies with no mortal name.
Swift chased my naked soul through hell's white torturing flame.

Yes, I have suffered, I have wept,
Far more than I myself can own,
When feeling strong the heart has swept
What tongue can reproduce the groan?
And if I could I would not moan
To weeping, broken-hearted earth.
'Tis sorrow's work to undertone
The noble thoughts she brings to birth
And other souls to teach her priceless, priceless worth.

For sorrow is of gifts the gift,
The very best high heav'n can fling
To purge, to strengthen, guide and lift
And touch the lips with fire to sing.
Her losses and her sharpness sting
From self into the soul divine,
Whose life and love and light doth spring
In all the forms that joy can sign
And mingled with the grief the purest joys enshrine.

A REBUKE

All life is rich in true prophetic signs
Wherein the future's hist'ry we may read.
What is to be the present hour outlines
As forests are by acorn scattered seed.
As seeds contain the perfumed flower or weed.

As germs unfold from inward power and plan,
As thought and feeling mother future deed
"The child must be the father of the man;"
Then who among the wise and good their future does not scan?

I have seen boys and girls in their young teens
Cursed and recursed by life's unparent soul
That brought. Far more by them than their own means
Their lives were swept from being's heightless goal
In God, and they were left to blindly pole
Their morted course by dark impulsive powers
Of sensual lust that birth did in them roll,
And by the breath of deep, infernal dowers
That ever streams in strength to earth to feed the mortal hours.

I see these here; broad is the way and wide;
Nought wise restrains; temptation is intense;
The far results upon the thoughtful ride;
Then as I saw life's little arc, and thence
The circle struck into the years far hence,
My heart was still and burdened with the grief
That heaven rains upon our calloused sense.
I saw and watched; as strengthened my belief,
The prophet's eyes the vision saw from seed-time unto sheaf.

I saw that on their brief and mortal stage,
Time's tragedy of dark impurity
Was struck. There nature's sense impassioned rage
And the splendid powers of high futurity
Contended short, and their insecurity
Fell with a crash as thunder shakes the night.
Soon bound and ground in sense immurity
Their lamentations, groans and curses bite
Into my spirit list'ning ears and burn upon my sight.

What parent hopes and griefs were mingled there!
What mortal strength and weakness did contend!
What prophet voice was sounding through the air!
What serpent power with hunger fierce to rend!
God, demons, heaven, earth and hell did bend
Themselves in action as around a chief
Of honored greatness. While looking toward the end
And driven by the rivers of that grief
My heart was weighed weighted down and soon sighed deep relief.

"They are not mine. Thank heav'n they are not mine!
The blood that jumps within those pumping veins
Of darkest prophecy did never twine

Its course from me to cast its crimson stains
Upon my future. Its heavy sightless chains
Can never bind this unrelated life
Nor plunge me in their deep remorseful pains.
The long, deep-bladed, piercing, suff'ring knife
Some other soul shall search and rend with agonizing strife."

"They are not mine. Thank heav'n they are not mine!
Their dark career mine eyes shall never see,
For time will part by her diverging line
Of change. Even my very ears shall be
A stranger to their tale and this to me
Undreamed. Why should I care? They are not mine,
And those not mine have serpent scorn most free,
Or only care that I to them resign.
Why should I grieve for them or theirs since nought doth round
me twine?"

"Have I not cares that weigh my weakness down?
Have I not griefs that eat my spirit free?
Have I not fears that daily, darkly frown,
And problems vast of what soul ought to be
Which burden down this lost and blinded me?
Just what I am is more than I can bear
And why then add another tragedy
Of sorrow to my heart? Why should I care?
The soul that sins must suffer thus and none can suff'ring share."

"I could not help. I could not even speak.
We have not met. I see but now and then.
And did I speak, could I make nature leak
The sense out of her passions? And youth—Oh when
Did youth receive instruction from the ken
Of age and sorrow? They would only sign
Me out for hate before the eyes of men
Unblessed by wiser dreams. They are not mine
So let them suffer as they sin and drink their sensuous wine."

Then instantly within my spirit deep
A silence strange was breathed. A voice of thunder
With long reverberating sound did sweep
Life's corridors and chambers round and under.
My nobler powers so sudden struck with wonder
Rose at that sound of vast eternity
Whose strength had rent life's tissues clean asunder.
That voice divine, that virtue unto me,
Some portion of her music strong I echo now to thee.

"Shame, shame on thee! Oh shame! Forever shame!
Thy dark and unarterial blood should now
Rise to thy countenance and darken flame
Mantle most deep thy worldly wrinkled brow.
Upon thy unresponsive cheek, Oh how
The blush should come and every hue eclipse
Until thine eyes abashed to earth should bow
And hide where light the darkness never clips,
With silence or a stamm'ring strange upon thy guilty lips."

"Shame, shame on thee! Oh shame, forever shame!
Such utt'rance dread, who, who would dream to hear!
The quintessential virtue of that flame
That maketh man a curse on his career,
The spirit mad and frame a living bier!
How rank disease when soul dare so exclaim
It's selfishness unto life's needy near!
Dark, blind and lost, what is thy spirit's aim?
Canst thou repeat that thought again? Shame, shame, forever
shame!"

"Shame, shame on thee! Oh shame, forever shame!
Where is the hope of life! Oh where is now
The promise of that hieroglyphic name
Celestial power had written on thy brow!
Thy soul be as low as a dishonored vow
And dark confusion flow upon thy brain!
Through all thy frame thy spirits painful plow
Till conscience feel a new and deeper stain,
Till thy whole nature wake and feel the love which thou hast slain.

"Is there not ought within thy mortal heart
That does transcend the selfishness of time?
Did thy Creator not to thee impart
Some portion from the spheres of love sublime?
Where are the elemental sparks that climb
As hopes on high with heaven's warm desire?
Where is the god that God within the grime
Of earthliness did breathe with rich inspiree
And ever seeks to find and feed with fuel of living fire?"

"The golden thoughts and bright poetic dreams,
The sons of song, the prophets wise and grand,
And natures pure in heaven's brightest beams
Hearing such words exclude thee from their band.
Thy own ideal enthroned at God's right hand
And standing bright among those hosts on high
Is by all heav'n with lightning visions scanned;
When echoes this within the azure sky
How shall that image stand and look nor dare uplift its eye?"

"The Virtues, Sorrows, Joys and Sympathies
And all pure Powers that never were redeemed,
But full confirmed in all prime purities
Which in their hearts their maker ancient streamed,
A line of light from that high host has gleamed.
On thee; what shall those enthroned natures think
When thoughts like these not one of them has deemed
Strike on their ears? How shall their spirits sink
To see a hope they loved and served on being's trembling brink?"

"The uncreated, creating heart and mind,
Enthroned on high as heav'n above thy earth,
Thy parent-soul whose fatherhood designed
Thy growth straight up to fellowship all worth
Divine in him, who since thy mortal birth
Inviteth thee into his nightless noon
Of light and love and purity and mirth,
What shall that holy, holy, high Triune
Think in the councils of their thought or feel in their commune?"

"The heavens high and all the powers therein
From pavement stones to God upon His throne
Stand up and utter protest 'gainst this sin-
Cursed self that dares the needy to disown.
Compassion, love and even judgments groan
With sorrow, shame and fear at thy denial
Of life's most common need. Who would not loan
Time's sense-possessed and driven youth awhile
A few warm thoughts and silent prayers to lead them out of wile!"

"How canst thou then disown and cast them off,
Thrust from thy heart and push them from thy door?
Thy utterance and action almost scoff
The midnight storms that on them sullen roar.
The tragedy and death and anguish sore
Which on them drive and rise upon thine eyes
Should touch some kindred in thy bosom's core.
How close, how close, how far, how far, Oh skies,
The members of this selfishness that from one root arise!"

"And on thy conscience thou wouldst plaster balm
Of sophistries as plausible as vain;
And since 'not from thy loins' in silent calm,
Can see the tangles of a curse insane
Their beings wrap and full destruction rain;
And since 'they are not mine' can sit and see
Without a prayer that would the fate restrain
Thy kindred caught in time's old tragedy
And re-enact the eternal scenes of dark impurity."

"Not from thy loins! True! True! They are not thine
By social laws that sanction men to sate
Their offspring with a curse when passions pine
Uneasy. They are not thine by laws that mate
The flesh in blood in most unhallowed state,
And hide their crime beneath the reverential awes
Of time. They are not thine by all the weight
Time, church and state can lend the crippled cause
By trampling in the dust and death the purest spirit laws."

"But they are thine by constitutional laws
Of all creation, for if the meanest things,
Shall not life's princely spirits draw
All souls below, round and above in rings
Of their relations? Old nature ever sings
The law by which progressive life must live:
'The living soul to all forever brings
Its special gift and life should be a sieve
To separate and all should learn, to live is but a give.'"

"Yes! They are thine. Souls are the first brotherhood.
One Life, one law all men in union mate;
Denying this and them doth blast thy good
Forever. They are thine by right and state
Ordained for them within the Uncreate;
Thine by ideals that over life doth shine;
By purposes that every birth should mate;
By laws and powers that maketh life divine;
By all the God in thee and them, thine, thine, forever thine!"

"All, all are thine that need or thou dost need;
The climbing hierarchs of celestial being
Rise in their ranks above thee. Each and all feed
Each and all, while the Infinite is freeing
His heart in theirs unconscious or in seeing.
That very life that feeds their spirit's pine
Cements still more the union never fleeing;
Inspires still more the passions most divine
By which they grow and soar and sing: Mine! Mine! Forever
Mine!"

"Still more and more high heaven doth inspire;
When gazing from their golden heights below
Their spirits mount to white intensest fire
O'er human need, o'er mingled sin and woe.
When weakness, ignorance, darkness and the foe
Of life and love doth round this human twine,

Without a call they haste to rich bestow
What they received fresh from the heart divine,
Down to each needy murmuring soft: 'Mine! Mine! Forever
Mine!'"

"So they are thine, and if the heavens above
Shed their divinest life upon they head,
And breathe the spirit of immortal love
To wake thy soul that slumbers with the dead,
Not less has earth's low deep of darkness fed
The great unwelcome truths of life and leas'd
Thee wisdom. From very dung were they not bred
To time and to the pastures of the beast,
And oft are they not driven on as unto death they feast?"

"Behold time's extended, multitudinous hosts!
Behold them from the morning of their birth!
What mighty lines! What power and pride and boasts
Storm on their course and the all-consuming earth
Soon swallows up their passions, grief and mirth!
How many of that fierce contending line
Have had their origin and issued forth
From parent's wish for children who should shine
In some high hierarchal place serving the most divine?"

"The quality of parenthood on earth
Is just above the level of the beast.
Unmotived they are welcomed at their birth
And after that the physical they feast,
Clothe and defend. They teach and train the least,
Nought, nought of heav'n or heaven's king and peers,
But all the crafts by which bread is increased.
The visions from the bright millennial years
When reigns of dark impurity have ceased,
Declare no parentage until it rears
Out of this earthly physical the spirit of the spheres."

"Shall then these fatherless and motherless
Who have their source within their parent's lust,
Who never felt the purposes that bless
The offspring of the pure and wise and just,
This offspring of the dragon's poisoned dust,
These accidents of nature's sensual pleasure,
Is not for them the fatherhood we trust?
Is not for them his grace and boundless treasure
Redeeming from the clinging curse that lust did in them
measure?"

"That sore, unfathomed, loud appealing need
And some few there most conscious of their state
Deny the blood relationship that feed
The surfaceness of life, and annunciate
The everlasting laws that dominate
The spirit kingdoms; there is a parentage
Far higher than the dust that mortals mate;
One most divine, of spirits that engage
More than themselves and purer life upon their heritage."

"These are the parents; the teachers wise and kind,
Who take the child and for the child's own sake
Bring forth in him self-consciousness and mind;
When faculty is quick and keen awake
The world's bright intellectual splendors shake
Upon his spirit's first and fresh surprise;
When all his powers with mental longings ache
Unfold upon his new uplifted eyes
The spaces, planets, powers and laws of inter-orbit skies."

"These are parents; the artists high and true
Who plant within the soul the finer sense
Of passion and of shape and sound and hue;
Who breathe into 'the form of fine intelligence,'
A spirit new that lights the countenance
With beauty, and beholds all heaven and earth
Unveiled to sight in sunrise radiance.
Spirits who bring such beings into birth
Bring forth far more than flesh and blood, spirits of poet worth."

"These are parents: the moralists of truth;
The consciences with justice, law and right
Who lift before the blinded eyes of youth
The virtues and the majesties that light
The universe while supporting by their might
The throne of the Eternal. High spirit awe,
Silence, wonder, sorrow, death and fear and night,
God, eternity, life, universal law,
Oh what a birth for parentage that envy forth must draw!"

"These are parents: the consecrated few
In whom the love of God burns as a fire
Of white intensity, who piercing through
All life and time with infinite desire
Send up the prayers that coming down inspire
A soul divine within these mortals dead
So they come forth to live, to think, enquire
And reach to heav'n, their being's fountain head."

Who brings such souls out of this earthly mire
Brings spirits for the living Christ who bled;
From him and from his fulness free both beings new are fed."

"The Infinite and the Eternal Love
Is fatherhood supreme in all degrees
Extensive and intensive. Heav'n above
Still groans in spirit travailing agonies
Upon some cross or 'neath Gethsemane trees.
All good that is, or will be in the earth,
All faith and love, prayer, truth and purities
That fatherhood has brought them into birth
And holds them with a love supreme and nurtures them with
mirth."

"That fatherhood of love and life and light
Has hovered over thee, Oh soul! far more
Than thou hast known. Those focussed passions night
And day did sacrifice and still they pour—
Around thy life their unexhausted store
Of sovereign grace. Thy unexampled need
And prayer have moved that fatherhood and bore
A grace as large as once for thee did bleed,
And far beyond our farthest thought his goodness still unfreed."

"What floods of light did through thy chaos dart?
What streams of thought within thy burning brain?
What passions with volcanic storms in heart?
What condemnation thy conscience smote with pain?
Life, death and the judgment throne did reign
In thee, and before thy soul did visions sweep
Of eternity; the one diverging train
Wing to the dark and dungeons of the deep;
The other bright with morning strength to the heights of
heav'n sweep."

"Thou hast groped up and down the stormy night;
The winds have howled, the lightning bolts have flashed,
Blackness and blinding rain did on thee light
And judgment thunders oft around thee crashed.
The conscience has thy spirit gashed and gashed,
Thy bleeding feet and frame and heart and tears,
Thy pathway through the wilderness has splashed,
Tortured and torn by most gigantic fears.
Thy heart and drunk the very dregs of life's contentious spheres."

"Have all thy sorrows only made thee wise?
Has spirit pain not reached her gracious end?
Has it but torn the darkness from thine eyes

And left without the goodness of a friend?
Was bitterness unsanctified to bend
And break but not to build in saving grace?
Oh vain, oh vain, that sorrow souls should rent
And never lift high heaven to embrace,
Nor sink them down to feel and bear this weak and truggling race!"

"How shall the dreams of love and prayer and trust
Born in thy heart ascend to heaven's height?
And aspirations unkindred to the dust
Sit down in power upon the thrones of light?
How shall the high ideals of life bedight
Themselves in action? How shall thy hopes arise
When thou dost so deny their inmost right
By stifling down their young and infant cries,
And darkness of the darkest death pour on their shining eyes?"

"What darkened birth of this time-driven host
Doth more than thee need some high father care?
What sin-sick soul upon this mortal coast
Needs more than thee a bosom that shall bear?
What sinful heart of grace did ever share
And more abuse and little did return?
What fervent soul did ever lift a prayer
And after God in spirit passions yearn
Yet human, brother, sister need, deny, reject and spurn?"

"Then, by all for which thou wert created,
By fountains deep of pure immortal life,
By heaven's hosts around thee congregated,
By God's rich heart with gracious giving rife,
By all thy want in this increasing strife
With sin and self, Oh mother thou this need
And let my words be as a surgeon's knife
To wound thee deep, and let thy spirit bleed
Death's double poison out, and in the life of love and deed!"

"Thy world is full, full of dark suggestion
Which strike on all with virtue or with vice,
Oh thrust it not thus from thee, nor shun
To look life in the face, but seek the thrice
High spirit pure and another paradise
Will from it rise. The ills of life must be
And with the good have one tremendous tryst.
From trial alone can come that purity
Triumphant through all space and time, secure, divine and free."

"This touch of sympathy which thou dost feel
And which is from the high celestial nurse

Of life divine, Oh receive it as the seal
Of his own soul redeeming from the curse
Of curses! When that spirit doth disburse
His precious gifts, the evidence is first
A universal love that doth immerse
Destroying self, and leaping in its thirst
Through all the mortal needs of earth to heaven whence it burst."

"Oh give it place! Oh give it ample scope!
This birth divine, Oh give it living fuel!
Oh nurse it at the very heart of hope
And feed it love and wisdom that can rule!
The only hope of life's disordered school
Are just those hearts that give these griefs access;
And heaven's courts will welcome from earth's stool
To thrones of light and lasting blessedness,
All whose unselfishness will bear man's weakness and distress."

"Oh cherish then this God enkindled hope!
Oh nourish it with all thou hast and art!
Oh pasture it on the ascensive slope
Of life! Oh fibre it from the immortal heart
Which on that plane to all will free impart!
On tension it until its growth will flower
In deeds and vital dreams the heavens start
In thee! Grief sanctified, balanced and in power
Is trusted with, forever reigns with heav'n's supreme endower."

"Take all the world as kindred unto thee:
Thy brother's ill, Oh never dare disown!
His sore temptation, weakness, infirmity,
Behold and breathe the Spirit's prompted moan!
Oh thus, just thus the good has ever grown
And spread itself in reproductive time!
The laws are fixed; all reap as they have sown;
So love with life, as selfishness and crime,
Return the universal laws to their first heart sublime!"

"Can sympathy save man from man's devour?
How dost thou know? Sounded hast thou this deep
Psychology for one short mortal hour?
Hast thou plucked forth the mysteries that sleep
In man's infinite, dark abysmal deep?
Or traced all interactions of the powers,
The persons, purposes and ways that steep
These earthly things? The prophets from their towers
Forever sway the world and life by passion's golden hours."

"But on how vain, How vain Oh God of light
Is heaven's lore upon this fallen race!
In this death-selfish soil no truth has might
To live and grow useless they sovereign grace
Doth nourish it within the warm embrace
Of life! Oh take him all parental Heart!
Oh lift him from the soil of death! Oh place
Him in the living vine where fountains start
From thine own soul to all in him with all thou hast and art!"

"Baptize him into thy eternal love
Where men doth find at once both death and life!
The self, Oh crucify and instant shove
The pointed nail, and most unmercied knife
Sheer through the accurs'd Adam heart so rife
With spirit death! Descend him to the grave
And there forever cease the moral strife!
Bandage the dead, darken and seal the cave!
Thus end his selfishness and self in him who lives to save!"

"Baptize again, still deeper in Thy grace!
Oh let the resurrection life arise
And another bring of the immortal race
That reigns above. Ye all sustaining skies
Bend down and let thy virtue vitalize
This crucified! Let this dead self receive
From the ascended heart the rich supplies
Of spirit-life, the life and gifts that grieve
For sinful man and gives their all their sorrows to relieve!"

"Baptize again! Oh once again baptize!
But deeper far into Thy inmost heart,
Until pure fatherhood in him shall rise
In stature, power and character! Impart
The fulness of the Spirit's gifts and bart
Thy seals upon a pure self-sacrifice!
Oh build him up to the earth eclipsing chart
Of Calvary, which now is paradise
Forever more with life supreme serves need without a price!"

"Now lead him out to this and every need,
A father on the spirit's lofty plane!
May faith and love be strengthened to his creed
And sacrifice be ever more his gain!
Oh love, pure love divine, have thou domain
O'er this new world, and evermore Oh pour
The golden inspirations that sustain
Soul at its height, thy being's largest store
Of fatherhood's divinest love, self-sacrifice and lore!"

Thus sang the angel of the crystal spheres,
Then spread his wings unto the azure blue.
As slowly died his music in my ears,
So died his form out of my spirit's view
To join his mates so pure and bright and true.
His words and not the solemn tones I pen
And cast as seeds which sorrow may renew.
When mem'ry brings their echoes back again
I bow as then and silence breathes: "Amen! Amen! Amen!"

LET THE THINKER THINK

The nurse of life is custom bound;
What has been still must be.
The infant birth she leads around,
As others think to see.
But oft the soul within the soul
Wakes up the slumbering gink
And trumpets through the spirit roll:
"Oh let the thinker think!"

"Thou art within a universe
Of birth and death and strife.
The world was made and planned to nurse
A thinker out of life.
Thinkers are nature's royal born
And thought man's meat and drink.
Art thou a man? Stand in the morn
And let the thinker think!"

"When plunged like most in loss and tears
And heart is plowed by pain,
When will is beaten by the years
And hope and faith are slain;
Amid the mangled corpses stand
Nor from the prospect shrink;
No time and place were better planned
To make the thinker think."

"There is no hope in heav'n or earth
When heart and mind are dead.
The thoughtless is a beastly birth
Without a breast or head.
But thou wilt rise above thy fears,
Rise, rise and never sink,
If thou wilt pause along the years
And let the thinker think."

"The infinite, eternal life
Doth round and round us roll.
Great fountains still more kind and rife
Would burst into the soul.
The "thinker" and the selfish "me"
Doth separate or link;
'Tis life and life and life more free
To let the thinker think."

"Oh let the sun this message run
Above the throne of noon!
Oh let the night this scripture write
Above the stars and moon!
Oh let old Life and Time and Strife
As crowd we to the brink
Write on our ways with lightning blaze:
'Oh let the thinker think.'"

FLIGHT

When our day's work is done
We sink us down to rest;
Bid farewell to the sun
And close our eyes oppressed.

Our faithful mother earth
A pillow for us spreads;
Heaps mould with sad unmirth
And props our weary heads.

Across the passionate breast
Draws green and growing grass;
Plants there a flower to rest
And sighs: "Alas! Alas!"

Silence and lonely night
Around their vigils keep;
Trees, cloud and wind unite
To just a moment weep.

The golden sun doth rise
And splendors round him spin;
The world right onward flies
As if we had not been.

A LAMENT

Oh self! Oh sin! Oh curse!

Oh vastest universe

So peopled rich with green and golden spheres!

Oh tell me now! Why does old nature nurse

These curses on our years?

Near hungry yawning grave,

Black darkness that doth pave

The void, thy horror-haunted deep appears

To mock the prayer for some divine to save

And lift from death's swift shears.

Heaven and earth and time,

Youth, hope and truth and rhyme,

Together weep hot blinding scalding tears

To see life fall from her celestial clime

Down this abyss of fears.

Fate, loss and strife and pain,

No more ye can restrain!

How vast a woe when God nor heaven hears!

Orphan, lost and storm'd, we fall before fierce rain

Down time's long circling years.

THE MUSES

Romance stands in the morning

And welcomes us to life.

Comedy with bright adorning

Conceals the forenoon strife.

Great epics and her heroes

The height of day delight.

Then tragedy's great Neroes

Of fear oppress us. Night.

MAN

The sons of morning prime

Mount up the golden thrones

Clad in the robes sublime

That Life unto them loans.

Then, then a sudden fall

And Death all bonds doth sever;

And in the midnight pall,

Lost, lost, Oh, lost forever!

SUNSET

Sunset and sunset
And now the day is done;
Twilight soft and starry gleams
Upon and round us run.
Now the glory has departed,
Now all life is fainter hearted
And a darkness solemn barded
In the setting of the sun.

Sunset and sunset,
And fears that strike and stun;
Sorrow and her vain regret
On all we would have won.
Now the senses no more waken,
Now ambition has forsaken,
Even hope her flight has taken
In the setting of the sun.

Sunset and sunset!
All is as ere begun;
Name and deeds and all are dust,
Remembrance of us none.
Now the silences eternal
And the shadow so hibernal
Rests on being so supernal
In the setting of the sun.

Sunset and sunset!
All, all the courses run;
Fervor, fever, fire and fret,
All thought and said and done,
Has been rounded, rounded, rounded,
Has been sounded, sounded, sounded,
Is forever dead and mounded
In the setting of the sun.

THE CHIEF END OF MAN

In passionate youth the end of life
Is gratifying sex;
When mounted up unto our prime
Old selfishness is rex;
When old and worthless, worn and torn
Life's former follies vex.

The ideal end of every age
Is just to calmly think,
From reason's fountain deep and pure
To drink and drink and drink;
And to the thinking of the wise
Accordant action link.

FAILURE

Oh let me die! Oh let me die!
This prayer doth rise upon my lips
With many and many and many a sigh
To pass into death's dark eclipse,
Where all our sorrows, strifes and slips
Are buried in the calm of sleep,
Where from their grave Life never rips
The hungry thoughts that we would keep
In everlasting slumber, moveless, sure and deep

I once was strong upon my way,
With purest heart and noblest thought;
My life went dancing in the ray
Of that ideal which had been brought
From those far realms my fancy sought.
I dreamed that I might do and be
What I had seen and had been taught
Of life we on the mount may see
And image in my life that ideal purity.

But after years of effort, now
I find that evil still has sway
Among my thoughts, and o'er my vow,
Within my heart, and from the day
Has almost quenched the feeble ray;
I am o'ershadowed by a cloud
Which o'er my head doth ever stay,
And which I fear will yet enshroud
In endless night my soul with sin and sorrow bowed.

I've lost the shining path divine;
I do not know the left nor right;
Nor joy nor peace, nor power is mine
And quenched at last hope once so bright.
If I could find my first delight
I'd lightly count the loss none know;
But time has broken down my might
And blown with ice lips on my glow;
Hopeless and weeping now into the night I go.

ROOT AND FRUIT

Before the world the high Powers did create
One question called and one did loud reply:
"How can we virtue give and glorify
This human kind so they will rise and mate
The gifts and grace of our supreme estate?"
"Give them to strife! Let love and sorrow sigh,
Until the self shall weep its life and die,
Then they in thee shall rise divine and great."
So geniuses of arts and graces fine
Oft starve for bread, are friendless and alone,
Racked, torn and bleed, but by some power benign
Life's beautifuls out of such roots are grown.
So thus they learn and thus they freely give
The dreams and hopes by which all humans live.

ART AND OBLIVION

"An artist thou must be
Or to oblivion go.
A famed futurity
None but the artists know.
Art maketh life divine
And from all death doth free.
The art and artists shine
To all eternity."

"All artists and all art
Are going down the deep.
Noon's splendors swift depart,
Stars fall from heaven's steep.
All artists, arts and fame
Into oblivion go.
The night from whence all came
Engulfs them swift or slow."

SOURCE AND END

Oh, it is wonderful
The things that come to birth
Out of this blunderful,
Chaotic blinded earth!
Though pleasure is the end
Of senses in the dung,
Yet something doth befriend
And higher things are sprung.

Behold the chaos strife!
Far worser worlds might be
From elements so rife
And stormy as the sea.
But self unto the self
Is brought by strife and wrong,
From loss he findeth wealth
And from his sorrow song.

Out of the body, soul;
Out of the senses, love;
Out of the strife a pole
To guide us far above.
This being like a flower
Doth burst with glory bright,
Doth burst with heaven's dower
And climbeth up the height.

Far, far above the skies,
On, on they pass from hence!
How godlike do they rise
Who spring out of the sense!
Oh, it is wonderful
The things that come to birth
Out of this blunderful
Chaotic blinded earth!

DREAM STUFF

Of dream-like stuff, of dream-like stuff
We mortals all are made;
A fleece, a gossamer web or puff,
A moment just arrayed;
A fragile, frail and phantom form
Upon life's highway rough;
Here do we stray, then haste away;
Are we not dream-like stuff?

A little piece of human kind,
A little line of form,
A little breath of feeble wind,
A little heart and warm;
How fragile is the infant child!
A vision it doth seem;
Amid the world so deep defiled
Oh is it not a dream?

A girl or boy as light as joy
And happy as the morn,
Unshadowed by the world's annoy,
Unwrinkled and untorn;
Oh Life and Time! Oh thorny Age!
Oh did ye ever deem
This image dancing o'er the stage
Was more than but a dream?

The youth and maidens in their love
With pleasure most intense
So people earth and heaven above
As shames magnificence.
What song and flash and merriment
Around them dance and gleam!
How few, how few of them can scent
A lightning passing dream!

All, all of life, the thrones of fame,
Place, honor, riches, power,
Song, empire, kings, crowds and acclaim,
All, all that fills the hour,
Love, loss and gain, fear, grief and shame,
All, all with which we teem—
Oh tell me Life and Time and Strife!
Is it not like a dream?

Our very nature seems to be
To dream and dream and dream.
We're only happy, strong and free
When visions on us stream.
But we ourselves and all around
A churchyard often seems;
And underneath each mouldy mound
Are our dead buried dreams.

We dreamers are and live in dreams
From cradle to the grave.
Time with her dreams forever teems
Though dreams our pathways pave.
Though instant blasted by the strife
We never wiser seem;
But circle round and round through life
And dream and dream and dream.

Of dream-like stuff, of dream-like stuff
We mortals all are made,
The granite man so hard and tough,
The flower in light arrayed.

All high and low, all sad and gay,
Rich, poor and fine and rough,
All that we are and do and say
Is all of dream-like stuff.

SURPRISE

I watched great Death around earth go;
He took man here and there.
Time was a stage; I watched the show
Of action rich and rare.

He nearer came and called my friend,
Then through the darkness turned.
The friend a lonely path did wend
And for the friendship yearned.

Still nearer yet; the parent soul
He called and did depart.
The solemn sight and grave and toll
With sorrow filled my heart.

Again he came right up and said:
"I come today for thee."
I stood aghast and almost dead
Shrieked out: "For me! Great God! For me!"

COMPARISON

Oh World! Oh Life! Oh Time!
When I call up my prime
And see it vain to climb this universe,
I feel my loss and weeping on its crime
Call down a righteous curse.

Then right against my fate
Ye bring my next door mate,
A man that bears a mountain on his back,
The sight of which doth crush me with its weight
And makes all blind and black.

Then to my fortune wed
I have a feather bed,
A royal robe, a feast and wealth sublime,
And more than these, the wisdom ye have fed,
Oh World! Oh Life! Oh Time!

HOW SWIFT OUR LIFE

How swift, how swift our life is run
And we give up this breath!
'Tis just one circle of the sun
And we lie down in death.

As full of hope as morn of life
We came to front the years;
We turn us mangled by the strife
And torn by grief and fears.

Sweet, soft and calm and innocent
We come forth to the light;
Dark, guilty, wretched and misspent
We pass on out of sight.

How swift, how swift our life is run
And we give up this breath!
'Tis just one circle of the sun
And we lie down in death.

GOOD-NIGHT

"Goodnight!" "Good-night!" How sweet the words
When heart speaks home to heart!
Like music of mate singing birds,
More heard than sounds impart.

"Good-night!" "Good-night!" Unselfish hope
Doth our best life ensphere,
And wakes the best, till spirits ope
And draw to each more near.

"Good-night!" "Good-night!" Such sweet desire
Is soul for soul exchange;
An angel sent with heart of fire
To guard each as we range.

"Good-night!" "Good-night!" The solemn night
That seems to thus divide,
Draws out the soul and doth unite
In spite of time and tide.

"Good-night!" "Good-night!" Love ever lives
In one encircling heart;
We clasp our hands, each farewell gives,
We go, but do not part.

"Good-night!" "Good-night!" Heart deep and warm
Is this our last "Good-night?"
Oh may we meet and say: "Good-morn!"
'Good-morn, forever bright!"

THE PRICE OF BREAD

My meat and drink! How small my need,
For I was born at life's low base.
Hard labor's lot in me did breed
Contempt for tables dainties grace.
My riper years still more embrace
The simple meal that always feeds
The strongest, noblest of the race.
I want but nature's barest needs;
Bread, water, rags and roof is all for which life pleads.

And just for this, Oh what a price
I pay that mouth be merely fed!
The angels in yon paradise
Will never dream man's cost of bread.
Great thinkers wise whom life hath bled
Will never bleed enough to think
What some in other courses led
Have paid for just their meat and drink,
As in the round of slaves they sullen, silent sink.

I've paid my youth, my morning youth,
High heaven's best unto the years,
A gift to Life like Love to Truth
Or morning dawn on darkened fears.
The hope and dream that ever rears
An ideal world in rainbow light,
Joy and her songs untouched by tears,
Drunk as the future doth invite,
I've paid it, what a price! for just my little bite.

I've paid ambitions soaring high,
Desire, the best that life has known,
To be a prophet of the sky
With lightning thoughts none dare disown;
Ideals and dreams and tales that tone
The man divine but yet unfreed,
The thinker when romance has flown,
The high philosophies we need,
I've paid it in the toil by which this frame I feed.

I've paid the passion of my powers,
Dynamic nature's life and fire,
The earthquake and volcanic hours
Whose tempests seized me with desire
And heart- and brain-storms did inspire;
The raptured passions that create
The dreams and songs and actions sire
That image life in high estate,
I've paid it for the bread that doth my hunger sate.

What matters it? The millions see!
There many great and greater far,
Have paid thy price to nothing be,
And more shall pay than paying are.
Nature a baboon and a star
Debateth which is best to breed;
With grim sardonic smiles that jar
The mother doth the baboon feed;
The soul goes down the night and nature doth not heed.

AN EPITAPH

He dreamed the dream of prophets,
Musicians, kings and heroes,
But life was just a tangled scrawl
Of Failure writing zeroes.

RESPONSE

Two spirits rich and prime
Did enter into earth.
The World and Life and Time
Did welcome them with mirth.
Bright splendors crowned the copes;
Star glories clad the night;
Ideals and dreams and hopes,
Filled earth and heav'n's height.

With fire each forward went
And climbed the crest of life;
Steel strength with wisdom blent
Did conquer in the strife.
One's path was soft and bright;
One fought through night and storms;
Both won and lost the light
The youth so fills and forms.

A magic magic hour
Returned the morning dream;
The ideals on the tower
Upon their prime did gleam.
One saw and smiled in scorn,
Saw, smiled and smoked and slept;
One felt a joy divine
And wept and wept and wept.

This with his books and art
Grew selfish, blind and dead;
Life unto life doth part
Just what to life is fed.
This in his iron and stone
Grew noble, tall and strong;
He gave and took the tone
Of life's immortal song.

A BOY AGAIN

"I wish I were a boy again!"
Keeps coming in my mind ;
The more I live and move with men
The more I look behind.
A something strange, yet strong and clear,
Like echoes from the past,
Like love now lost but still more dear
Those times upon me cast.
Oh times, Oh times forever flown!
Oh days forever dear!
The farther from me ye are thrown
The closer ye come near.
Thy mem'ries cast their magic spell
Upon my heart and mind,
And visions bright as poets tell
The mortal hour doth blind.
Ye were the angels of the morn
With golden raiment clad;
Your locks and wings were never shorn,
Your hearts and faces glad.
Ye were the spirits most divine;
Ye made a heav'n of earth,
And lifted up the sparkling wine
To me with beaded mirth.
But now as meteors of the sky
Ye most are hid from sight,
Yet sometimes burst and on the eye
Cast splendors swift and bright.

Ye now are dreams on golden wings
From paradise divine,
Which often comes and gently sings:
"Come back to me and mine.
Come back! Come back, Oh weary worn!
Come back, Oh wand'ring child!
Come back to me though heart is torn
And hungry and defiled!"
When round me now, unlike of yore,
Unbid ye sweep my skies,
When through my day and night ye soar
A something dims my eyes;
A something in my soul doth melt
And flows around my heart,
Until these walls the moments belt
Are sundered far apart.
I slip by some divine device
From hate and strife and wrong,
Back to my childhood paradise
Of love and light and song;
Back to my childhood paradise
Of hope and joy and life,
Untouched by earth's contagious vice,
Or fear or grief or strife.
Dear is the dream and bright the hour,
And sweet the song ye sing,
But Oh how short! for time and power
Me swiftly back doth bring.
I wish I were a boy again!
Oh my departed years!
I wish so much I cannot pen
The fountain of my tears.

CHANGE

From out of yesterday
Today doth ever rise.
No ripest fruit can stay
But living swiftly dies.
The winter brings the spring,
The spring the summertide;
So age to age doth bring
The better to abide.

Man mounteth up the plains,
From beast to savage breed;
From savages to reigns
The thinker built and freed.

Each gathers up the past
And lays another base;
Departs as cometh fast
Another higher race.

The sons of song divine,
On to oblivion go;
Their music is the line
That chants the funeral woe.
Faith, hope and love and truth
Go down, but others rise,
Our highest dreams of ruth
Are shining in their eyes.

So ages, empires, worlds,
Are hast'ning swift away;
All rising, going down
To bring a better day.
Eternal death and life,
Destroy and recreate,
But shall the endless strife
Bring Hope her final state?

REBELLION

Oh World and Life and Time
That rule this course and clime!
Thou sure hast been a blind infernal brute,
An insane fool and vast gigantic crime
Unto this mortal shoot.

Yet unto some I see
Thou hast been kind to me.
Compared to some I've had a feather bed,
And from thy wine, as salt as salt could be,
My spirit strength has fed.

But what of this vast mass
That to oblivion pass?
And what of those who stand beneath thy curse?
When heav'n and tell, nature and man, alas!
Their vials of wrath unpurse?

Thus oft is stirred the storm
Of fierce rebellions warm;
When losing self in those that round me rhyme
Blaspheming thoughts into my being swarm.
Oh World and Life and Time!

ALL WE LEARN

This selfish life is full of strife
And blinded greeds are we.
All daily burn but all we learn
Is "I" and "mine" and "me."

Through tears and sighs we grow more wise
And far beyond earth see.
The splendor beams that clothe our dreams
Is "yours" and "thine" and "thee."

Oh Spirit of all Love and Light
Unseal your godlike powers!
Teach to the heart high heaven's art
Of "them" and "theirs" and "ours!"

But Oh how swift the years untun!
And Oh how swift we die!
All life we burn and only learn
This "me" and "mine" and "I."

PROGRESS

Oh World! Oh Life! Oh Time!
Oh trinity that chime
The happy bells! Oh happy bells of birth
When we descend from heaven's azure clime
And enter into earth!

Up, up the future's slope
Ye nurture us with hope!
Oh what a host of shining dreams divine
Doth blind us blind, as in the light we grope
With passions drunk with wine!

Oh World! Oh Time! Oh Life!
Why with a lightning knife
Is that dream world in youth's delighted eye
Like Sodom rained and ruin, blight and strife
Around the journey lie?

On, on! No stop, but change!
No turn but onward range!
More heavy weights, more pain and blinding tears
Afflict the heart, till open up most strange
Some new discovered spheres.

Oh Life! Oh Time! Oh World!
Though scorned and wreck-like hurled
Ye turn the loss into transcendent gain;
For higher spheres with golden gates imperaled
Shine on the heart and brain.

Out of our grief and tears
We look unto the years;
Ourselves we know, and know ye mortal three,
The friends disguised, for your harsh kindness rears
In us eternity.

Oh World! Oh Life! Oh Time!
Oh Trinity sublime!
Ye nurse us first, give and destroy our dreams;
Show the ideal; and build manhood to rhyme
With heaven and its themes.

Three faithful, faithful friends
Working to vastest ends!
Work on, work on against this course of crime!
Once ye were cursed; but curse to blessing bends,
Oh World! Oh Life! Oh Time!

DREAMS

A billion billion mortals
Are deep in downy dreams.
The splendor round these portals
On them inviting gleams.
They are rising now and singing
As morning on them streams,
And the glowing passion springing
In its fulness almost screams.

But the day is full of sorrow
And our life with struggle teems,
And the strongest oft must borrow
From old Death in their extremes.
Just beyond the darkened portal
Seek they rest from all their schemes,
And a billion billion mortals
Now are sleeping in their dreams.

IN THE FLESH

What is written has been writ
And he that reads can read;
But until the heart is bit
To bleed and bleed and bleed
Without God or man to fit
A balsam on its need
Thou wilt never find the wit
That doth the spirit feed.

What is written has been writ
And he that reads can read;
But till battered, blue and bit
By conscience, sense and greed,
Till the globe of man is split
By conflicts that they breed
Thou wilt never find the wit
That doth the spirit feed.

What is written has been writ
And he that reads can read;
But until the heavens sit
On soul and doth it lead
Through the strifes that maketh it
The elemental breed
Thou wilt never find the wit
That doth the spirit feed.

For we know that the law is spiritual: But I am carnal, old under sin. For that which I do I know not: for not what I would, that do I practice; but what I hate, that I do. But if what I would not, that I do, I consent unto the law that is good. So now it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me, for I know that in me, that is, in my flesh, dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me, but to do that which is good is not. For the good which I would, I do not: but the evil which I would not, that I practice. But if what I would not, that I do, it is no more I that do it, but sin which dwelleth in me. I find then the law, that, to me who would do good, evil is present. For I delight in the law of God after the inward man: but I see a different law in my members, warring against the law in my mind, and bringing me into captivity under the law of sin which is in my members. O wretched man that I am! Who shall deliver me out of the body of this death? Rom. 7, 14-24.

Oh wretched, wretched man! Oh life more worse
Than darkest death! Oh elements that press
Within like an infinitudinal curse,
Ripe, ripe with consummated bitterness!
Contention rife, thy blinded and resistless
Passioned furies without restraint or change,
With serpent eyes and lash that scorpions' dress,
Have driven me from fields that I would range
And fanged me on and on to this last dungeon strange.

My soul is in a dungeon here. Day and night
And my own elements are walls most thick
About me and confine soul from its right.
The dark extending atmosphere is thick
With death and dread contagion.— So quick
Is its destroying blight it instant smothers
Like a cloud each faint and fluttering wick
That feeble strength a moment here recovers
And slays life's smoking light as death the hope of lovers.

My clanking chains, not steel, but heavier far
Than ever despot's mad revenge could lay
On captured but unconquered slave of war
Gird my once innocent life. They growing weigh
Upon my heart. Rusted with bloody spray,
Salt tears and foam of soul exuded sweat,
Their hungry teeth into my vitals prey.
Oh who could dream on immortals could be set
A weight, a chain, a fear their passion strength to fret!

Strong fettered here my chains are stapled fast
Into a rock that strangely sculptured grows
Up from my dungeon floor, like a pillar cast
From some dark cavern's base. Around repose
My prison walls, and near or far as close
Or wide unknit the chains upon me bound—
The heavy chains that life so subtle throws
Out of the heart and gird us round and round,
And only fully felt when man himself has found.

My days were dark; there scarce is morning light;
The golden dawn and noon are in eclipse;
Gray somber clouds with palsy raining blight
Roll through the skies like full-sailed fated ships.
On, on they fly; and when the dead day dips
Into the night, 'tis more than night to me;
For that black hemisphere so tensely grips
My sense that even spirit cannot see
And in the double night dark fear are thick and free.

My calloused hands and feet, numbed to to endure,
Fumble around and secrets they unseal
To me. Upon the walls that strong immature
Portentous signs and glyphics strange I feel;
Deep cracks and gulfs are where I tread or steal
Across the floor, and round holes and deeper chinks
In the low angles where something might conceal;
But woe in all no dream-soul ever thinks
Until sin's dungeon wall arises round and sinks.

Those cracks upon the floor open and close
With huge desire, as if insatiable greed
Awoke the deep from her mid-night repose
And now to appease her pangs of hunger need
Would swallow night and silence. Who has been freed
From thund'ring verge of sudden cleft crevasse,
Or stood at night beyond all human heed
On some such ledge, will know what then did pass
When soul in hope and fear close hugged that granite mass.

Oh sudden, sudden, solemnizing sound
That cleaves the solid earth complete in twain
And plants me straight before this black profound!
Oh mighty gulf that hope has instant slain
And fixed paralysis upon the heart and brain
Of my unconquered passion! Oh abysmal night
Of impenetrable blackness that fain
Would swallow up the prisoner and his blight?
What fierce and formless fears and hungers on me bite?

Black plumbless void! Vast hungry gulf of night
That swallows up with loud, unlanguage pain
This mortal and the hopes that doth him light!
Oh dark and hollow-throated death, though bane
Of mortal curse be on me, restrain, restrain
Your crunching teeth! Oh close thy craving maw
And hide thy quick consumptions from my brain!
Thy sight, thy sound, thy very name is awe
And fills with black despair all subjects of thy law.

What ear of earth has ever heard of thee
And trembled not with oft returning fear?
What eye has dared the stern reality
And grew not blind before thy presence near?
All giant strength that ever did appear
Thou hast devoured. To think down thy dark maw
Is bolder than time's most courageous seer;
And to descend—who, who thy hunger saw
And not with frantic cries to live did backward draw?

Why does this Death, black, fierce and hungry Death
Beneath my feet divide the solid earth?
Why does this dark and dragon-poisoned breath
With images of dread and monstrous birth
Steam up the cloven gulf? Why does this worth
And rounded globe of man so shake with fear
And from his soul convulse unto his girth?
Oh Death, thou cleavest the vastest roundest sphere
Of all my pride and strength and down would plunge from here!

Still down thy gulf and hollow throat will look
My soul a moment, though she around may turn
From that brief view with vast oppression shook.
Oh mind, be wise and instantly discern
Life's mystery! See what is death, and learn
The heart of her dissolving maw! Oh see
If there exists for which the wisest yearn,
Some spirit spark for all eternity
And if the good and ill reap joy and misery.

Soul scarce doth look a moment down the night;
Her arrow-piercing eyes but penetrate
Death's first and surface folds, when with affright
She flieth back, as a maiden from the gate
Of wildest beasts would hasten with the weight
Of white and ghastly fear upon her. Oh thought,
Hast thou now come from that short traveled state
And on thy frightened, lightning wings hast brought
A burden vast with woe from that brief moment caught?

What hast thou heard? What hast thou seen or felt
That thou so faint and trembling dost return?
Thy sight would make the granite-hearted melt
For counsels dark thy looks unto me learn.
Why are thine eyes so wild, so blazing burn,
Expanded wide and whole frame struck with blight?
When down the gulf what didst thou there discern?
Dost thou confirm the dreams that on us light
And seal the awful dooms the wrong hears from the right?

I see it dim—the shadowy forms of dream
Assume the lines of stern reality;
The visions far that oft so fitful gleam
Now clothe themselves like life and time; I see
The solid, fixed and lasting forms that be
In these now moral fluids. The curses
Run their everlasting courses and free
Their final judgments. The wrath unpurses
Through all that blasted world for wrath sin ever nurses.

Oh what a world doth gleam upon my sight!
What peoples and conditions dread I see,
Like dreams of guilty conscience in the night!
Oh what despair and what intensity
Of fiery-minded, breasted agony!
What unutterable wail and boundless curse
Do these imprisoned hearts and hands set free
Against themselves, God and the universe!
Oh hope and fear and dream, know ye a fate more worse?

What worlds of consummated sin doth stare
On life's unblinded eyes! What lost estate
With heritage of woe! Oh who would dare
The loss and lamentation of such fate!
Why, why my soul, from hell's oft opened gate
Should on thy mind these burning horrors spring?
Shall I become with them an equal mate?
Swift doubt her venom'd robes around me fling.
The more I cast them forth the closer do they cling.

When bound in this suspense—when in the fear
And doubt and dread before my soul can gain
Composure—Listen! Listen! Something is near;
Something, something that my organs over strain
Through these round holes and lower angles fain
Would fill my prison pen. Mercy! Mercy!
Heaven, Oh heaven deliver me! Restrain,
Restrain the curse! What do I hear or see?
In darkness undiscerned some reptile foul must be.

Look! Look! Through that broken lower cornice
Upon the floor it glides. Where shall I
Flee this awful hour! That glittering head and hiss
Creeps round my dungeon floor, its flaming eye
Lighting the dark and moving on and high
Help! Oh help! Break my chains! Oh free me
From this horror's horror! Break my chains, I cry!
Merciful God! Oh heaven, can it be
This death-cold clammy thing shall touch and coil round me?

Room! Oh room! Walls break down! It locks my thigh
And lifts its head with death's foul dampness wet
As if to look or strike me in the eye.
Oh fiend! Incarnate sin! Dost thou forget
Thou brought'st me to this prison! Would'st thou set
The raging poison of thy burning brain
In mine! No! Never! Never! I will yet
Though life is worse than death from madness gain
A little strength to wage this last and mortal strain.

In this contending hour these iron fingers
Will hold at length those flashing fangs and eyes
With what of strength in desperation lingers.
Yes! Kindle up thy madness in surprise
As one and thou in this death struggle dies!
Relock thy coils and tighten ere I smash
On sharpest rock thy head's dilated size!
Oh chains fall off my arm and let me dash
This serpent's growing strength with one fell swooping lash!

Oh conquering arm, yield not! Oh iron strength
Of conquest and defeat; thy muscles strain
As ne'er before and hold her at thy length!
Should poison hot of that enraged brain
Now generating its electric pain
But plant its fangs upon thy corded brow,
Contorted agonies of death will reign
Within thy frame as in the serpent's now!
Oh my arm of hope! Oh thou last resource! Oh thou

Sole defence! Canst thou not this horror hold
And once again unbind the corded chain
Of its involving length? Behold, behold
Those wide dilated eyes and gathering gain
Of passion! Dost thou not feel the power that fain
Would wrap itself round thy immortal brain
And heart? My last dependence! My strong
Deliverance! Shall power be spent in vain?
Shall the beast overcome thee in this long
Contentious hour? Art thou trembling now? Prolong, prolong

The strife! Vanquish disarming doubt! Behold
The beast and break the mighty links in twain
Of this dragonean strength! Oh heaven, unfold
More merciful destructions! Oh unchain
The mighty powers of thy all sustaining reign
And save me! Monster, night-born and cursed,
Shalt thou around me wrap thyself, thou train
Of horror? Shall thy hell-soul be unpursued,
And my soul change from man to beast and being's worst?

Oh must I fail! Shall the beast again
Encircle me! Shall these dragon spirits reign
And revel in my heart! I cannot pen
This slow advance upon me. My powers are slain.
Her folding coils enclose me in a chain
Of death. I'm crushed! I'm crushed! Death's fatal dart
From these deep piercing fangs so fiercely rain
Her poisons on my unresisting heart,
Which never knew till now, temptation what thou art.

So overcome and in this deadly faint
With sleeping serpent coiled within my breast,
Oh would some fate but hear my dumb complaint
And answer praper! But no! The powers of hell infest
The place. They engender a tangled nest
And brood within the spirit. They empower
Themselves and revel with infernal zest
As kindred to the heart's corruptions. Oh shower
The consummation dear to this abandoned hour!

So the tempted and temptation conquered soul
Would wish death or deliverance. The heart
Responds as those ideals that spirit pole
Cannot pole on the life. Temptations start
In a thousand forms and a subtle art
Is in them all that soul cannot resist.
'Tis a prisoner's battle. Black shadows dart
Their premonitions and arm me as I list
My strength is often broke, scorned, trampled, pierced and hissed.

And like temptation this soul-abandoned world
Seems to delight in bringing forth disease.
It seems the life by which it round is whirled,
To reach into the buried deep and seize
Some pestilential carcass that unfrees
Death's poisonous vapors. She delights to throw
The mortifying mass on souls that please
In virtue. Death's corruptions overflow;
Time's every compass wind rank odors round earth blow.

If I should breathe an hour of inward peace
And with content lean to the prisoner's part,
If hope once more its flame of life increase
And visions of deliverance on me dart,
Then suddenly by subtle sorcerous art
Through a spring-door a corpse is quickly flung
As my companion. With echoing curse depart
They doing it and leave me here among
These rank corruption plagues that from the dead are sprung.

Oh horrors passing horrors! Who could live
Near such and not feel this presence overawe
All sense! Who dare dream where these diseases give
Their stifling stench, and death's dissolving maw
Upsteams her odors round! To watch her law,
And by her phosphorescent light, decay
Over the dead each fouler curtain draw,
Here where each breath must concentrated stay,
Plunges me in fainting fits each hour of night and day.

And like it oft will vomit forth my floor
Some beast of beasts most vile, as if death's maw
Now had her fill and had no room for more;
Or rather as if rank corruption saw
Carcass too strong for her dissolving law
And cast it in my dungeon to decay;
Cast it far in and shrinking quick withdrew
To the wide air, while I must constant stay
Besides this mass of death to watch and share its play.

Thus to be chained unto a mass of death
Slowly dissolving round my moveless feet—
To be immersed in such a cloud of death
Thick, foul and damp and warm with living heat—
To feel upon my stifled brain there seat
Themselves the drops of this contagious life—
Oh how could soul with sense of softest beat
But wish the swift and rending lightning knife
Would now descend and end all change and pain and strife!

To be immersed in such a place, to have death's
Foul steaming air mingled with all my meat—
To have corruption as the very breath
Of my all-hungry heart—to feel the feet
Of loathsomeness upon my bosom beat—
To see white maggots feed down to the bone
And be compelled of this strange food to eat—
To think their greed will claim me as their own,
Can I but fear and faint and groan and groan and groan!

Contagious death, most pestilential death
Is hovering in the poisoned atmosphere,
As if the grave did vomit forth the breath
Of her dissolving dead, and nothing here
Of wind or storm the deadliness to clear.
Up, up the warm air steams and heavy hovers
Round my soul. I am oppressed with fear;
I hate the presence; the crawling vapor covers;
I cry, I gasp, I faint and struggle as it smothers.

When I come to myself a moment's breath
Is all that I may draw, then round my brain
I feel again the pestilential death.
My throat sickens and vomits but in vain;
My eyes swim dizzy; all my senses pain;
My mind grows faint, then staggers round and slips:
So lingers for a moment; then insane
I rave of "sin" till silence seals my lips,
Or consciousness has passed the hour of her eclipse.

When I have passed a dark, unconscious hour
My senses stunned re-gather strength to bear,
Though staggering this death that doth devour.
Perchance at length some mercy beats the air
To circulation and I again may dare
To lift my brow unto the shadowed heaven.
I see the granite walls that rugged wear
The naked strength that might defy the levin;
They speak and sense to me no hope of a replevin.

But prisoner as I am, space rests my eyes.
The troubled spirit doth arise to stand
And gaze upon these symbolled walls and skies.
But suddenly, without a sound or hand
There streams effulgent light that has unmanned
The passion hour of high, heroic minds.
All other ills and all that life can bind
In one though mingled with infernal kinds
Are nought to that strange light that sudden bursts and blinds.

For then I see on both the earth and heaven
And all along the stretching walls of time
Are glyphics scrolled as if some pen of levin
Had written there while nature was in prime.
Now with a burst effulgently sublime
They flood the world and blind the spirit blind.
The conscience struck as after awful crime
Is terrified and palsied and maligned,
So blinded by the light that fills the guilty mind.

At times unseen and long unfelt they tell
Me nought; but now an incandescent fire
Out of my soul the darkness doth expell
And with it my most blind and mad desire
For light, The wrathful and intensest ire
Of holiness divine these symbols burn
Into my heart. The all-denied require
Of love and law with vengeance on me turn
And under their white light I all things new discern.

That fire divine within those symbols burns
The complicated tissues of sweet lies
Instantly from off my heart, as fire spurns
Cobweb. Deep within conscience's blinded eyes
Consuming indignation instant flies,
Burning in such pains as echoed has no tongue
In fiercest fires of furnace agonies.
Few, few of life e'er know what pains are wrung
When by God's holiness the nerves of life are stung.

"Curséd! Curséd! Curséd!" Such sudden sign
Doth flash on this intelligence and bite
Into the spirit's core, that this divine
In human souls grows conscious of the right.
"Curséd! Curséd! Curséd!" Such intense light
Is sudden shot into those symbols great
As both destroy and recreate the sight
To understand the now degraded state
And soul ideals enthroned with majesties of weight.

Curséd! Curséd! Curséd!" Oh what a sight
Of stern re-actions and resisting hate
To sin! What fear, repulsion, brand and blight
Are in those words no conscience dare debate!
"Curséd! Curséd! Curséd!" Oh what a fate
For high immortal being! Oh what a first
Of finite ills and burden vast to weight
A world sustaining mind! What lightnings burst
With swiftest dazzling spears before my soul accursed!

"Holy! Holy! Holy!" What indignation light!
What strength of wrath against the law's offender!
What deep abhorrence and what passion white
Glows in the eyes of love's outraged Defender!
"Holy! Holy! Holy!" Who could dare tender
Opposition, or who would dare begin
A combat with such destroying splendor!
Who, who in heav'n or earth would dare to sin
When that effulgent light upon his soul pours in!

"Holy! Holy! Holy!" The heightless height
Of all the universe is in that fire—
All spiritualities and ideals bright.
To which all heav'n's purities aspire.
"Holy! Holy! Holy!" 'Tis the require
Of infinite and high eternal power—
The highest emanations from the Sire
Of all created being—his best endower
To most supremely bless or instantly devour.

When those divinest symbols burn and blaze
Before my new awakened spirit they seem
More than the white and dazzling spears of days
Effulgent soul. Their blinding splendors stream
As straight and swift as morning's golden beam
Deep into nature's seven-fold spirit night.
God, self, sin, heav'n, hell, life and death and dream
Spring from the dark and that revealing light
Makes new, great and intense all things the soul bedight.

Then first is born the true, immortal spirit;
Then first the sense of immortality
Awakes; then first the mighty passions rear it
Unto its height and lift it far above to see
The life of the emancipated free.
The universe doth grow with vast expanse
And trifles mere that in and round it be
Grow on the soul before that lightning lance
That burneth in the truth on life's sin-blinded glance.

But first grows sin; this curse on life's estate
Is sun-clear seen. On each such feeling, thought,
Word, act and all that doth man uncreate
Turns this pure soul. On each is instant brought
The focussed strength of light and soul is taught
By that electric, white resistance
To all impurity, that it is fraught
With vastest strength to sins of pride and sense,
While strength and fear and pain are tensioned most intense.

I feel the sin, unseen, unfelt before;
The inmost chambers of my mind, my heart's
Subterranean labyrinths and the core
Of inmost being are opened wide. Lightning darts
Into my night. Blinded and stung, soul starts
In horror at the revelations. Sin, sin
Through all my being is mingled with the arts
Of self-deception! As that blaze poureth in,
I see and feel and know the sinner I have been.

Electric agonies of heart and brain
And kindled by the glances of that light;
Upon my spirit's nerves its visions rain
As on fresh guilt the midnight boltings bright;
Sin shrinks and hates high heav'n's searching sight
Into the deeps of her corrupted life
And dies before that purity so white.
Woe, Woe, when being's elements are rich and rife,
For hell within a hell within us wages strife!

All these things make my heart a scorpion's nest;
Feeling with feeling is in deadly wrangle;
And in my brain more worse than in my breast,
Populous thoughts as serpents none can strangle,
And bright as death anger oft will spangle,
War with themselves and with my heart at will.
Would power go forth their strife to disentangle
They turn on me with fangs their rage doth fill,
Implant my nerves of strength which contorted soon are still.

But Oh, the blackest blackness of the night
When that effulgence for a moment dies!
Alone, accursed and terrified with fright
Before the threatening universe, my cries
From the profoundest deep of spirit rise
To the unresponsive void. Vast powerful fears
Thick populate the universe. Malignant eyes
And ebony forms and tempest dark appears;
Night, thunder, lightning, wrath, around my spirit veers.

Who would not then from sin's infernal prison
Bursting be free and in his spirit soar!
Oh how desire and hope have often risen
To be but where and what I was of yore!
Oh for the life my soul in childhood wore
Beside the deep and pure and purple sea!
Oh for the forest's green and open door,
The blue sky and her rainbow daughters free,
With life and light and love and azure purity!

In traveling hence from childhood's paradise
The vicious rust of this contagious life
Has run its course from dream almost to vice.
Why is it thus? Must being rich and rife
Be inharmonious, in elemental strife?
Must thought and sense, conscience and high desire,
The ideal and the real forever wage
Intensifying war? Is this divine inspire
The conscious plane on which contentions never tire?

Why was I born with such a weight of sense
Though more nor worse than others of my kind?
Why should dark images rise up intense
And charioteer toward hell the heart and mind,
Till heav'n itself is deaf and dumb and blind?
Why should the flesh that links us to the earth
Be open gates where demons come and bind
The spirit fast? Then trample in dark mirth
The high, celestial soul that heav'n awakes to birth.

Why should the spirit have the fruitful germs
Of such diseases dread within the heart,
Defying all the secrecy and terms
That reason or the conscience may impart?
Why does ambition, jealousy and mart,
Vain pompous pride and envy, anger, hate
And scornfulness, if accidental art
Them merely touch rise up in ruling state,
Scorning the moral powers that meet them for debate?

How often has my spirit tried to cast
The individual and this mass of ills!
But who can stem the fulness and the blast
Of heterogeneous life when floodtide fills
The heart and mind! My being higher wills
And could I reach but what I wish to be,
I'd bare my heart to demons and their grills;
I'd bid them work, and that with vengeful glee
If they could burn out sin and sins enslaving me.

Oh could my hand but reach into my breast,
This heart of sin I'd tear out by the roots;
On it my soul would lay its curse the best,
Then remembering all its bitter, bitter fruits
And bearing it where some volcano shoots
Its sudden fire and blasts of noxious air,
I would hurl it down, though a hell of hoots
Would mock, and plunge me in the crater there
After the heart divorced, best curse and thankful prayer.

Shall then not be desire of so much worth?
And can I not be free from faults of time?
Shall mere defects as cling to mortal birth
Still hold me here as I myself were crime?
Many nature souls that have their birth in slime
E'en from their filth will draw abhorrence strong
To struggle on and 'gainst their foes will climb,
Till rising from defeat again, ere long
Reach summer's golden light in beauty, strength and song.

And men like me, low born as I was born,
With all these germs deep planted in the heart,
Defeated oft and trodden down in scorn
By the giant strength of flesh or by the part
Of spirit most corrupt, did they not start
From these entanglements and after tears,
Repeated strife and purifying smart,
Turned their defeat to victory? Have not the years
Beheld a spirit strong climbing the golden spheres?

Yes! Yes! Again I'll fight and struggle on
Against these clinging ills, though hitherto
Has failure followed failure. Whene'er I con
My spirit, my troubled conscience, my true
ideal of life, or when I dare to view
My nature's deep corruption, then I feel
The impulse press my being through and through.
I will arise. All things in thunder peal:
"Arise, arise to battle, and battle for 'thy weal!"

Again, again I'll fight and struggle on!
Within me rises up a noble lore
Of cosmic energy. My spirits don
Another hope and I feel the sacred store
Some kindling powers upon my spirits pour.
Oh my mother earth! Oh ye azure skies!
Oh Nature that doth reign forever more,
Fall on me now! Now, now re-energize,
That after thee thine own in battle strength may rise!

The golden sun and night's white, starry face
From chaos rose and are forever more
Established. Great victorious soul, now lace
My doubtful heart as thine own was of yore!
Oh earth and sea, mountain and plain and shore,
Oh forests, fields and gardens of sweet flowers,
Great cosmic, conq'ring life of nature, Oh pour
Upon me here endungeoned from your bowers
The strength and joy and hope of your victorious hours!

Ye moral powers, ye granite souls of truth,
Ye high, high thoughts of good and free and wise,
Which find a native home within our youth
And purge the darkness from our blinded eyes,
Ye have awakened me and now Oh energize
My soul! Still more awake within the power
Of pure celestial passion! Arise, arise
To the music of my most aspiring hour!
Come, all ye souls divine, engird me and endower!

Ye high ideals that filled my glowing brain
And swelled me with hope's raptured heart intense
Now nourish me from your high conquest plane
And fill with soul against the sins of sense.
Ye life examples bright whose countenance
Of power smiles on my struggling soul, Oh draw
My scattered passions and knot them most intense!
Ye images of spirit-life and -law,
Inspire my eyes today with your most solemn awe.

I must be free! Above my loss and pain,
All woes and chains this slav'ry pen can bart
I feel the sense of duty growing plain
And sovereign claims the place within my heart.
Out of my darkness, fear and stain doth start
A majesty of high and awful name
None dare dispute. I see thee as thou art
Arising and feel the splendors of thy claim,
Nor dare dispute a word thy frowning looks of blame.

From thy high frowning brow I feed my soul
Against the chains that bind me in this tower.
The inspirations of thy claim doth roll
More energies than others give this hour.
Thy high command, thy presence bright, thy power,
Nature, influence, authority and command
Impart to me a but once needed dower.
My soul by thee is taught erect to stand,
And driven on to burst my prison's iron band.

I will be free! For what was I made man?
What means this prophecy within my heart?
Have I not power? What is an "ought" but "can?"
Is not freedom in life's immortal chart
The goal of all? A most celestial art
Says to my soul: "There must, there must be power
Within thyself! The conflict will it start
And fling aside the slav'ry of this hour
And gain thy heritage, thy liberty and dower."

I shall be free! Oh now, my soul, once more!
These hopes and truths and powers are working now
And girding thee with strength unknown before.
In this divided self remember how
Thou gavest death that high and solemn vow!
Gird up thy soul and more tug at thy chain;
At each low breath let strength still lower bow;
These fetters will not stand the passioned strain
Of highly purposed youth or spirit travailing pain.

Courageous be, my heart! They're yeilding now!
Thy hope be full of what thy soul shall gain!
Think of the life that will adorn thy brow
And purity that nought again shall stain!
Think of hell's curse so heavy on thee lain,
And freedom high thy spirit shall endow.
Although each nerve and muscle feels the strain,
Still struggle on as thou art doing now;
Though ankles and thy wrists the iron teeth implowd

Still struggle on with feet and heart and arm!
Oh reckon thee little of these growing pains!
Thou wilt be free, delivered from all harm
And dowered with a spirit's priceless gains.
Oh do not cease, but still fight on! Ye plains
Or virtue give your sympathetic grace
And armor me for long enduring strains!
Come, ye promises of triumph, let your face
And words fall on my heart and tension tighter lace!

Come, ye bright prophecies enkindling hope!
All truths and triumphs of celestial ire!
Come, ye resistless passions, come and ope
Your hearts and pour in mine the vast inspire
That circles round and with divine desire
Renews your own! Oh world soul! Oh spring
Of nature's life! Oh elemental fire!
Dissolve these alien fetters now and fling
This bondage from thine own! Spirits of earth, Oh bring

Your quick victorious help! My need behold!
Does not your own, brother or child, require
Ye on this burdened hour! Oh hasten and unfold
Your vast resourceful hearts! Come and inspire
With super-human, conquering desire
For freedom! Oh spirits that doth reign
In all earth souls of pure celestial fire,
Come to my need and pour into the strain
Your high triumphant strength and rend my bondage chain!

Rend, rend these dominations of the sense
And these rebellions of usurping flesh!
Now rend, oh rend these spirit-sins intense
That ever rise with form and strength afresh!
Now rend, oh rend this circumstantial mesh
Upon my soul and give me liberty!
Rend all I am! Re-spirit and re-flesh
The man unto the nobler type I see!
Oh come into the hour and make me strong and free!

Oh do ye not respond! Do ye behold
This virtuous hour and this unequaled strife
Unsuccored die? Unanswering and cold,
Do ye see not this mortal leaking life
As if the heart were pierced as by a knife?
Spirits of promise, do ye see the strain
Of manhood's noblest hour and life with rife-
Est effort for a life? My soul, 'tis vain
To struggle with the sins thy spirit doth ingrain!

Prophetic souls, send quick your promised aid!
I'm doubled up and in the final strife
Both back and forth and side to side am swayed.
Answer! Are ye my friends? Are ye for life?
Where are ye now against these victors rife?
I'm driven back and beaten down and bound!
It's all in vain! Great nature wields the knife;
None of her sons against her ever found
Unvanquishable strength and true victorious ground.

My passion strength I feel it now descend;
The battle's wave from off my soul declines.
I am defeated now, though still I bend
Me to the strife. I've poured the choicest wines
Of youth into the hour and still around me twines
This curséd power. I cannot break the chain
Of bondage. I'm spent! I'm spent! My soul resigns
The conflict. The world has on me lain
A dark, enslaving power, I cannot rend in twain.

I'm bound as is a slave. The cosmic soul
That builds the world from off this moral height
Cannot these sinful dominations roll
Into the gulf. The travailing, groaning might
Of nature's strength cannot purge out the blight
Of sense and spirit. Oh disappointed hour!
Life's ills have roots far far from mortal sight
In being's deepest deep. The heart may start
A battle with itself but vict'ry does depart.

The strife is done. I can contend no more
Against dark power that rises up supreme.
The hopes that did unto the summit soar
Are dashed to earth like fragments of a dream.
The strength that did upon the moment stream
Was merely words and did my spirit bend
With their persuasive eloquence. All seem
To promise power, but what inglorious end
Doth youth and passion find when they with her contend!

What melancholy silences oppress
My spirit! What despondency and grief
Enrobe my manhood like a leaden dress
That sinks me down beyond hope of relief!
Here, here I sit and brood for days and the chief
Deed of life undone, though her ideals supreme
Call for the deed into the moment brief.
Oh World, Oh Life, Oh Time, your most sublimest dream
Floats by like rainbow clouds upon the winds that stream.

The noblest thought of life's impassioned years,
The highest hope that wisdom can desire,
The brightest dream that ever crowns the spheres
Or visions high before the heart inspire,
Is to be delivered from the lawless fire
That fills the frame and be divine renewed
In motives as the ideals firm require;
But here at length from all these disendued,
Far in the night I sit and brood and brood and brood.

What shall I do? What shall I do? Must I
Sit dungeoned here in this dark slav'ry prison?
My struggles though to the pitch of agony
Are failure and are mocked at by derision.
Will no bright dream or hope inspiring vision.
Or voice now break on this defeat and plunder
Which on my soul with vast surprise has risen?
Will nought within, above, around or under
Teach ignorance and fear to tear these chains asunder?

"Oh soul! The strong and striving heart of youth
In fervors warm of its white glowing sense
Is nearest and yet farthest from the truth.
Failure must break the trusts of ignorance
Till thou dost calm thy passions, so that hence
They wait to learn the truths of age and time;
Their secrets make life's young heart so intense,
As quick and sure to master fear and crime
And in their liberty life's golden heights to climb!"

"Thyself, thyself, and gilded selfishness
That youth deceives alone have been thy hope.
Thyself that doth impetuous forward press
To mount the plains, doth good and evil ope
To lasting strife as they come forth to cope.
The ills of life are stronger than the good
And long resist youth's sweet and selfish dope.
One-half of man unto the summit would;
The other half rebels and ever man withstood.

Thy self and strength, thy faith and hope and worth
And all the powers that upward in thee rear
Break not the chains round an immortal birth.
How oft, how oft, the full and rounded sphere
Of man has found from many a fruitless year
That strength and strife cannot the spirit free.
Is spirit-freedom to thy heart most dear?
Heed what thou art and more what thou shalt be
And draw thy spirit's hope from strong eternity."

"Turn from thy faith in self! Let no vain trust
Of selfishness have longer place in thee!
Eternity alone can spurn time's rust
And those endowed with her intensity
Will soon dissolve the powers that round them be.
Wouldst thou gird thyself for true, victorious fight?
Spurn far thy chains and in thy soul be free?
Leave, leave thyself, long dispossessed of might,
And let eternity base and build up thy right!"

"Thou art eternal. A forever spark
Is in thy breast. It lendest to the mind
The lights that burst into thy dungeon dark
And it could fill the world and blind it blind.
O heart arise? Arise and thou shalt find
Another heart to answer quick thine own
With energies of most triumphant kind!
Eternity from her disturbanceless throne
Shall succor thee with powers which thou hast never known."

"The supernal mother stands within the shade
While man in his blind ignorance will dare
The legioned foes of life; when disarrayed
Of strength and pride she cometh forth to bear
Him up. Lift thy defeated hands in prayer
And she will lift thee up to fellowship
Her own omnipotence and life. Thou wilt wear
Her imagery and thy new passion strip
The armor from the foes that now thy spirit grip."

"Eternity is throned forevermore
Upon the heightless univese. She brought
Thee forth and by this circumstance would pour
Herself into thy soul. She long has sought
To lift thee to the plane which she has wrought
For thee—even to fellowship her reign.
Dost thou desire the destiny o'er-fraught
With being's best? Pierce through her courtal train;
Speech to her mother heart will never speak in vain."

Oh Eternity! Eternity! Thou
Mother of most almighty strength, thy child
I am! Thy name is written on my brow.
Thy life flows in me though it is defiled
By time's disease. Art thou unreconciled
When death thine own in darkest grave would cover?
Oh help, Oh help this lost one sin beguiled!
May our one life of son and saving mother
Strengthen with surest hope 'gainst this devouring brother!

Mother divine! Oh mighty bosomed breast!
Maternal nature of celestial worth!
Hope of the universe! Though most oppressed,
Mortal in frame and dwelling on the earth,
I dare to claim thy high immortal birth.
Thou art my life and now my highest dream
Is of thyself upon thy sovereign throne.
I do not ask, I feel thy being stream
Into my empty heart and hope and passion teem.

Though long unknown, though veiled by time and sense,
Unrecognized, unworshiped and unserved,
Thy motherhood, devoted and intense
From my unconscious spirit never swerved.
Though blind and lost my aimless course was curved
To meet with thee. Oh mother most supreme,
That found me out and for my heart reserved
A faith and hope that shineth like a dream,
Thou art the hope of life and visions on me stream!

Now thy calm strength of years, of ages, aeons;
Assurance rich of victory and peace,
The living faith of thy eternal paeons,
Thy conquest over foes with time's long lease,
Rain down on me thy spirit with increase.
Thou givest from thy sceptered wide domain
Of past and future and now dost free release
To me the life that does inspire thy reign
Of vast harmonious power, of conquest, peace and gain.

I feel the thought of thy eternal age
Renew the strength of my dissolving brain;
Thy deep, pulsating heart of purest rage
Medicates with infinite's vast strain
A hope and health out of this corpse sin-slain.
Thine eyes, clear, calm and motionless as night
Most girding inspirations on me rain;
While whispered tones of volume and delight
Gird and inspire my soul to combat for the right.

Thy mighty presence bendeth o'er me now
With thy divine and most majestic face;
Thy hand of strength thus laid upon my brow
Gives visions of thy grandeur, power and place;
The nourishment of thy enriching grace
Is to my soul eternal and divine;
Far scorning fear and all sin can embrace
I feel some portion of that life of thine
Is passing from thy breast into this heart of mine.

Eternity! Eternity! Great mother
Of all beings' hope now and forever more!
Out of the world that would my spirit smother
Thou liftest me and in my heart doth pour
A fulness to my being's coreless core.
Forgiving and all-giving mother of life!
The infinities of power within thy store
Are filling me with measures over-ripe;
Thou bucklest on my mail and bidst me to the strife.

Maternal heart, thou wilt be with me now
As once again I combat for my right!
Now chains, my soul with greater strength will bow
And ye shall yield to her celestial might;
Oh ye shall break though now ye bind me tight
In sin! Wage on the strife! This life sublime
O'ercomes this strength as day dissolves the night.
Eternity is mightier far than time
And she now gives her grace and calls me to her clime.

I will be free! I will be free! This course
Must yield and this usurping power be thrown
Down from the height of this steep universe
Into the hell from whence it first has flown.
Eternity from her heightless height has sown
Her mighty thoughts and passions in my heart
And now I feel as I have never known,
A power, a right, a consciousness doth start,
Unlike the promises that former did depart.

I feel the right and solemn consciousness
Of immortality gird with a might
And passion that is earth and time resistless.
It rises up within me as the fight
Now brings the everlasting wrong and right
In conflict for dominion. Oh sinful powers!
Oh enslaving spontanieties of blight!
Ye find a stand before these late endowers
That fill my mortal heart from yon supremest towers.

Though hard ye press with sheer and long resistance
To wear out strength it wears the flesh alone;
The spirit finds a more than flint persistence
As eternity renews me from her throne.
Though conflict has dread agonies unknown
I will be free and with my dying cries
Crunch: "Liberty or Death!" in every groan.
I'll fight for life as this short midnight flies
And after time and death renew war when I rise.

Oh help me mother! Dost thou see my pain!
Behold me struggling here 'gainst sin alone
With more than agony in my fierce strain
For liberty! My joints with twisting groan;
Straining eye-balls have from their sockets flown;
My muscles hard as hammered iron are wrenched;
My jaws firm set grind the enamel stone;
My fingers bleed from nails so deep enclenched,
And my whole naked frame with bloody sweat is drenched.

Break! Break ye chains! Oh chains of sin and death!
Ye links of life forged in infernal fire,
Ambition, envy, jealous strife and breath,
Pride, scorn and hate and most unclean desire,
Oh yield to my last strength and holy ire!
Eternity, once more thy impulse start
Within me! Help, Oh help! My soul inspire
With saving might from thy immortal heart
That from the curse of sin my spirit may depart.

Oh cursèd, cursèd sin! The supremest curse
Of high creation calls thee from this corse
Of death. Oh Eternity, thou nurse
Of this immortal, with thy resistless force
Tear thou the curse from its profoundest source
In me! Tear it forth, though the conflict scar
The spirit black on its eternal course!
Sin, sins and curse, where e'er and what ye are,
Out! Out by the roots be torn! Be torn and hurled afar!

Oh Eternity, dost thou see this hour?
Dost thou not heed the prayer I raised to thee?
From thy sustaining, unexpended dower
Wilt thou not give the gift of liberty?
Before thy face, beneath thy very eyes, Oh see
This most unbalanced strife and rending dart
Into my soul of dying agony!
Oh infinite and high almighty heart,
Hear this last uttered prayer my lips will ever part!

My last appeal! My confidence! My trust!
Parent on whom my final hopes all rest,
Hear me and help! Help and do not thrust
Thine own begot from thy maternal breast!
Oh unresponsive mother! I am oppressed
My all the foes within me and without,
And dost thou fail with thy deliverance blest?
My battle soul is broken by the doubt;
I groan and deeper groan; my enemies "Victory!" shout.

I ask, petition, intercede, implore;
I supplicate thy help against the foes
That gather strength and press upon me sore.
Oh help! Must I fail? Shall this conflict close
And I a captive to the curse? Shall thy glows
Of elemental spirit in me die
And on my battle sin trample with the shows
Of everlasting victory? Oh art thou nigh
And am I losing heart though strengthened from on high?

Oh Eternity? Eternity!
Thou infinite and reservorial power!
Oh Mother of the struggles thou dost see!
A mite, a mite of thy soul on me shower
And set me free! The desperate earth-born hour
Is gathering strength. It draws life from my heart.
These resistences my faith and hope devour.
Help me, help me! Oh mother, dost thou bart
Thy offspring to its foes and from thy child depart!

Oh Eternity! Maternal Mother!
Didst thou not bring forth to the universe?
Out of the earth and things that often smother
Didst thou not stir me up to front the curse?
Then help, Oh help, and with thy spirit nurse
My failing strength 'gainst this gigantic power!
Delay no more! Oh come and free unpurse
Thy energies into this crested hour
And make my foes thine own and instant them devour!

Come, Oh come! I'm straining to the breaking point.
My being's force to its last dram is drained.
The moment's nigh that life must disanoint,
Worn of its strength so strained and strained and strained.
Oh Eternity, I feel I am disdained!
Thou dost not care. I feel that thou art gone.
The evil powers that have so often reigned
Around my soul in victory now are drawn.
And soul is worn and weak and helpless as is brawn.

My strength is shorn away. My empty heart
Is drained of hope and health and life. The woes
Of last defeat doth torture like the art
Of some inquisitor. The moral foes
Of life are here and the legion throws
Itself upon me. I cry for strength. I faint
And fail as powers invincible now close
Upon my soul. I cry in my complaint:
"I am thine own, Oh sin! with most unjust constraint."

I'm done! I'm done! Defeated still again!
Deceived, deceived in life's supremest hope!
Stripped of all strength, returned unto my pen,
And fed despair, the deadliest of dope.
In blindest grief I grope and grope and grope,
And all I find in life is this defeat.
The evil powers are established on the cope
Of everlasting man. No power can seat
Man's spirit in the rights that in his bosom beat.

The old decrees of fate are fixed on me,
And being's elements work out their power.
The universe and e'en eternity
Behind impel the issues of this hour.
'Tis vain! 'Tis vain to try to disendower
Nature of empire. The prophecies of fate
Now paralyze my strength. High on her tower
Eternity supreme in sovereign state
Doth scorn the very strife she calm doth contemplate.

This infinite contempt—even repulsion
Of eternity—this casting of her power
Unto my conq'ring foes is convulsion
Like an earthquake to hope's established hour.
My mind descends her throne; the disendower
Of her great self is like a soul eclipse
In dread, chaotic blackness. Vast fears devour
The remnants of my strength and spirit slips
Down that abysmal deep where sleep and death all dips.

My soul at length awakening from despair,
Between the real and ideal I had sought
Is torn and torn till the very heart is bare.
What unutterable sighs are hourly taught
Unto the unresponsive voids or caught
Up by the winds to echoing mock the day!
While others vast can find no fitting thought
Or word or sign to wing their flight away
But deep within the soul must formless, silent stay.

Why am I so encompassed fierce around?
Why am I thus within this curse so wrought;
Inextricably entangled? I am bound
In nature's meshes and completely caught
In her great elements that are so fraught
With infinite contempt of all I bart.
Has unknown crimes of ignorance been taught
My soul, that when my mounting spirits start
Still more life's foes arise and vict'ries swift depart?

This last, this last and bitterest defeat
Doth prophesy the final, fixed estate.
Since eternity has failed to seat
My soul in its inheritance, what great-
Er promise of deliverance can mate
This vastest disappointment? As helpless
I am chained a prisoner to this awful fate
I cannot dream of power than can undress
These cumbrous, cumbrous chains that on me growing press.

Alas! Alas! No more again I hope.
These chains of sin no power can off me cast.
Their giant strength I dare not dream to cope;
A thousand times has failed and this the last
Has failed me, though eternity had passed
Into my soul from her established height.
Oh prison of despair, within this fast
Of sin I must forever dwell, while night,
Will mock my former hopes nor ever beacon light!

Oh why were not my elements so mixed
That I might victor be and be a man?
These evil powers in their dominion fixed
Seem like an excommunication ban
Of heav'n upon me. The celestial plan
Of soul doth prophesy a liberty
Far more today than when I first did scan.
Though eternity doth fail me to be free
The hunger that she feeds is like infinity.

Here beaten down in bitterest defeat
And failed by all the powers that man has known,
I'm weighted thrice and chained in this retreat
Beneath the throne of night. I groan and groan
As if the anguished, travailing earth did moan
Through me its long, long, long desire. My thoughts devour
My soul; and fiercer as they lean have grown
They tear my inmost heart; till every hour
I dream and dream and dream of life, freedom and power.

Is all in vain! "No! No! Thus only can be bought
High heaven's truths out of this falsehood night.
Pain alone the most can teach. Those by her taught
Alone can pierce the veils that cloud the sight
And see the truths of heaven's heightless height.
Pain deepens life unto the wise who weep.
Those who suffer, those stung by loss and blight
Will strike the life far from the surface deep
And its great vital shock will wake their dreamy sleep."

"Wake thou! Oh wake from sin's dark ignorance!
Are worse than lost the suff'rings of thy cell?
Hast thou not taught thy soul divinest sense
Dost thou dark lies persist to longer tell
Thy heart? Truth veils Himself and bids 'Farewell'
Till thou dost see it is a vital rock
On which the universe of life doth dwell.
Now ope and feel the life electric shock
Of God, when in and out both beings free unlock!"

"God is no dream sprung from the hours of night,
Nor any philosophic thought or name,
Filled till it has an intellectual light—
A moral look—a majesty—a fame—
A crowd of wise idolaters who claim
It is supreme but all their acts disown—
He is no attribute high spirits frame
And place upon the universal throne
So far beyond themselves as never can be known."

"God is no vast and omnipresent ghost,
A magic, subtle, all-pervasive influence
Like ether clouds around thy mortal coast
To rain on life a high, divining sense.
He is not immanental power intense
That with blind aim evolves the moral law,
Creates the soul and lights the countenance
With faith and hope and solemn, solemn awe
And wonder, worship, praise, and all toward which they draw."

"God is not all things but a living self.
He is the soul all being doth endower;
A self-existing fountain of such wealth
Of life that nature and all angel power
Lives from his heart. His fulness every hour
Is first the source and all-sustaining flow
Of finite life. E'en death and time's devour
Cannot resist the streams He sends below
To each created heart that opes to his bestow."

"A person pure in whom all love doth dwell;
A father heart to whom each child is near;
A soul too wise to lift the curse of hell
But leaves it still to teach through strife and fear
The curse of self, thy curse most deep and dear.
To let thee suffer thus, himself doth plow
As thee; but still thou learnest, down goes the shear.
If self is full undone turn to him now;
Light will illume thy soul and new hope seat thy brow."

"Enthroned on high, supreme in power and right
His salvation delivers from the curse.
The Father, Son and Spirit glowing white
Forever reign o'er this wide universe.
This strange unbalanced birth is but to nurse
The sense of sin; and this strange helplessness,
That sinks with strife in ruin worse and worse,
When this is learned all heaven waits to bless
With liberty divine no slave of sin can guess."

"Vast hosts of men all helpless as thou art
Have rich received a resurrection power
In their dead selves, and instant did depart
In vanquished dread the strong, engirding hour
Of hell. Then clad in Christ's ascension dower
And burning with his Spirit's glowing flame
As conquerers they trod this earthly bower
Victorious with everlasting fame;
And what has been for them for thee may be the same!"

"Look up! Look up! Oh soul look up on high!
Cry out! Cry out! Cry out with loud appeal!
The Father throned within the azure sky
Will hear thy prayer and unto thee reveal
The strength of his right arm. His heart doth feel
Thy slavery chains and his omnipotence
Out of His own eternal power will deal
A spirit strong forever conqu'ring hence,
Forever conqu'ring worlds of spirit and of sense."

Oh God forgive this lost and wand'ring heart!
Forgive allegiance broken from Thy throne!
Forgive the life that from thee did depart!
And found her joys in this poor self alone!
Forgive the sins that could Thy breast disown
And from thy bosom of immortal birth
Spurned heart lullabies of rich celestial tone!
Forgive the sins 'gainst fatherhood and mirth,
My insane blinded life delirious by earth!

Sins against love, especially 'gainst thy love,
No equals find in man's recorded crime;
And I in scorn thy heart far off did shove
And chose as friends the adulteresses of time.
The world divorced from thee is but a prime
Beauty-robed mother of harlots; and these
My young ambitious spirit took to climb
The planes of life. Thou and thy purities,
Unrecognized, unknown, my blindness did not please.

High scorning pride that dared thee to thy face
Blasphemed the lot thy wisdom give, and thrust
It in contempt for some world higher place.
A hidden hate deep in my heart of dust
Rebellion ever raised against the trust
Thy power and love did claim. Oh Love sublime
That rules yon azure skies, as pure and just
As thou so art, can they celestial clime
Forgive and rain down grace upon this child of time?

Against mankind, my brothers of the race
How could I feel that strange, inhuman scorn?
And 'gainst thy sons, the sons in thy embrace,
Was something worse than to the plain earth-born.
Deep underneath the surface we adorn
Was that dread self that thy Son crucified
And sent him back, rejected, slain and torn.
Oh Infinite! Oh mercy deep and wide!
Can thy forgiveness flow as doth a tropic tide?

Behold thy Son! Look on him and forgive!
Let his divine, high priestly sacrifice
Atone for guilt and purchase right to live!
Enthroned near thee his intercessions rise
Sustaining hope, as thy sustaining skies
The thrones of day and night. Canst thou disown
Thy promise bright and blot it from thine eyes?
Canst thou reject thy spirit-prompted moan
That in confession lies with groan and groan and groan?

Since from thy heart thou didst give up thy son,
Thy bosom son in whom abode thy heart—
Since they that love with such death have undone
As with surprise the universe did start—
Since thou didst not thy awful curse impart
But poured the grace that did dissolve the crime
Of decide—Oh matchless as thou art,
Thus passing dream with grace the most sublime,
Sure thou wilt strengthen me to burst the chains of time!

Thou hast the power. Thy strength engirdeth every globe
Of firmamental night. For their majestic race
Through long unmeasured aeons, them thou dost robe
With motion, brightness, majestic and grace.
Though all so interact nought can displace
One circle path a hair. Thy power divine
Behind and in the motions which they trace
Still girdeth them. Great purposes of thine
Still guide the universe unto some far design.

High angel hosts that bright adorn thy throne
And shed imperishable glories round
All heav'n, whose hallelujah thunders own
And mingle with the vast aeonic sound
Of all creation, thou dost eclipse. Thou dost confound
Archangel strength and their sublimest song
By everlasting powers and gifts that bound
From thy rich heart. The universe from wrong
Thou keepest like thyself forever pure and strong.

And men on earth in this infernal power
Of sinfulness, thy twice almighty hand
Didst free and full deliver, though round their hour
Was hell itself, one vast resisting band.
Their chains were broke and spirits made to stand
With heaven's height and crimson purity.
Then year by year on this soul-wrecking strand
They stood sublime and like the mountains free
Unshaken by the storms of winter, night or sea.

Then what am I? One word of thy command
And sin and hell no longer fill my heart.
One glancing look, one motion of thy hand
All powers can rend and cast them far apart.
One lance of light thy eye doth downward dart
Will rend all chains as lightning doth the night.
One finger-touch and earthquake shocks will start
Within my being and thy tremendous might
Destroy and recreate this sinful to the right.

I feel the life from thy vast central soul
That like the sun wakes life with passion red,
Through currents dry around my being roll
Renewing warm the crimson breath that fled
Before the strife life's darker powers have fed.
Oh all-sustaining source of finite life!
Thou resurrection of the quick and dead!
The power that rules thy elements so rife
Is just what I require for sin and curse and strife.

Thy love is bathing now my broken heart.
The inflamed, raw and cancered wounds are more
Than being healed, as on their burning smart
Thy alabaster soul doth freely pour
This fragrant balm of rich and healing store.
I did not dream that hope again could rise
But now I know that love can life restore;
Though its last hope in confined slumber lies
A more than passioned youth its heart can energize.

The strength and hope that life has disendued,
Torn, broken, bowed and disarrayed of power,
Doth vigor feel as if by love renewed.
It doth me bathe, engirdle, and endower
With resurrection hope. I'm like a tower
Invincible and surely shall be more
Than conquerer. Already ere the hour
Of final strife I feel within me pour
From this new heart of hope a battle life and lore.

What I need most but never yet could win
Unto my heart thou dost in grace divide—
A central soul-resistance to all sin,
Be it the strength of spirit soaring pride
Or lizard-groveling lust that cannot bide
The light. Deep, deeper than all deep desire,
Deeper than self, the soul where evils hide,
Thou plantest free thy sin-consuming fire,
So that my heart revives with thy intense inspire.

And now thou head of this else headless race,
Oh gird me strong with that high victory
Which thou thyself when all hell did embrace
Gained for this lost far, far beyond the sea.
Oh Eternal Victor, remember me
And help the weak as on thy battle day
Thy Father saw and did remember thee,
Gave thee His might and hosts that round thee lay
Thy high victorious arm first stripped, then flung away!

As once again I gird me for the fight,
Oh most Almighty Christ, my tension lace
Against these deadly powers that in their flight
Pause round my soul and on this hour and place
Pour fresh resistance! May thy victorious grace
Hell's gath'ring minions bind beneath thy throne
Of awful judgment; or them again Oh face
As on thy resurrection morn! "Give, give thine own
But one free chance for life!" my inmost heart doth moan.

Oh Christ enthroned, o'er heaven and earth and hell,
Thy boundless heart the universe supplies!
Oh resurrection life, thy energies impel
My spirit on this hour! Now, now arise
As an incarnation in this disguise
Of mortal man 'gainst this immortal foe
With all the power that clothes thee in the skies!
Oh long accursed, infernal powers below,
Ye energized antagonists of soul, ye overflow

Of blackest hell, would ye enforce your curse?
Would your vile cankerous chains, the most infernal
That being binds in all this universe
So slave an intellect and heart—a vernal
Spirit, high created nature for supernal
Measures from the heart of life to be
Forever free? Oh rising and internal
Resistances of sin! this spirit must be free
And not the less I feel your final destiny

Of certain sure damnation. Ye cannot bind
Forever hell's mighty and usurping chain
Around this burning heart and soaring mind
Of immortality. The passion pain
Of travailing soul exalted to the plane
Of heav'n defies this vast blaspheming claim
Of earth and hell. The resurrected reign
Must be established here; or blots of shame
Hang high forever dark on his eternal fame.

Still pull and tug! Still tear and wrench and twist!
Oh do not reck the losses of life's game!
Oh what to thee an ankle or a wrist,
Or arm or leg or thy whole mortal frame!
Reck not if spirit's quenchless lightning flame
Extinguished be in this soul welt'ring flood!
Far better this and in oblivion's night thy name
Extinct become and in warm crimson blood
Thy memory be dissolved in desperate strain or thud

To sunder these vile chains. Reck not the sweat,
Nor the iron drops falling around thy feet!
Heed not the crimson trickling streams that fret
Thy strength, nor the angry teeth that eat
The flesh from off thy bones and naked beat
Thee to the ground! It is either death or life
And death itself must on thy bosom seat
Ere thou canst live in freedom. One glorious strife
Delivers thee from sin and her contentions rife.

I must fight on! I must, I must be free!
I cannot live if sin doth longer find
Enthronement or a living place in me,
A spark of her within my heart and mind
Is equal curse as if all hell consigned
Herself into my soul. I must be free
And here and now! Oh slave that hell doth bind,
These awful powers from off thy heart must be
And dowered with thy curse to all eternity!

I still will fight. Most vile accursèd death!
From thy corruption soul are daily born
Abortions new with foul contagion's breath.
Come forth, come forth! Out by the roots be torn
Forever! Birth-planted and life-blasting thorn
Of being, heav'n's celestial sense of right
Not longer ye endure, would rather now be borne
Down "steep washed gulfs" of hell, down through the night
Of serpent tangled clouds or through the rainings white

Of heaven's burning bolts than longer bear
This gend'ring curse and her reptilian breed.
A thousand times, a thousand rather dare
The final judgment wrath should be unfreed
Upon me, than longer bear the seed
Of hells within. Out! Out! Oh out, thou curse
Of serpent pits—thou parent of the deed
Of darkness—thou prolific mother-nurse
Of every ill that blights this glorious universe

Of God! Out! Out! How canst thou still remain
With thy hell-gendered germs within my heart!
In this earth-tearing, spirit-rending strain,
Why still do hell's resistances upstart
And offer battle to the hosts that art
From heav'n! Oh unendurablest sin!
A swift annihilation or the part
Of liberty this gigantic hour will win,
For fiercer grows desire than when it did begin.

Then, then ye sinful powers, in bondage still
And manacled will ye my spirit hold?
No! Never! This unvanquishable will
And passion's high intensity have sold
Themselves to life's last strife and must unfold
This curse from being's most immortal right.
Oh yield ye now! Your domination must be rolled
Forever down from off my passion's height,
Descended by the strength of heaven's gracious might.

I must be free! I must be free, though more
And more this mighty agony shall wind
This mortal frame as never known before.
This new, high-keyed and concentrated mind
And heart intensity is growing blind,
Insensible and dead to all the world
And all things else. Ye must, ye must unbind
From off the new born god. Thought I be buried
From this dread suff'ring hour, and by fierce storms be whirled

Down night's absymal raving gulf of vast
Insanity, I still will fight and dare
Such awful fate than to be bound at last
As sin's eternal slave. Oh come and share
My strife, Almighty Victor! Let my prayer
Of unexampled travailing agony
Remembrance wake of what thy soul did bear
Upon that hill of far famed Calvary
And from thy throne on high, Oh haste and succor me!

Ascended Christ! Eternal, sovereign might!
Victorious, omnipotential power!
Since thou hast died thou hast the glorious right
Each sinful soul to swift and strong endower.
Remember, Oh remember that awful hour
When thy strength failed, and by thy memory wake
Thy sympathy for me! Oh from thy tower
Sublime, this curse from off my spirit break!
Its presence, power and guilt, shake, shake to hell, Oh shake!

Dost thou delay Oh dost thou not yet come?
Dost thou behold and leave me here alone?
Wilt thou to this and all my prayers be dumb?
Before the world wilt thou thy word disown?
Oh Life and Truth! Oh Faithful Promise! Oh Throne
Of hope and help, do not thyself disgrace!
Help, Oh help me! Bid saving grace be shown
To desperate need and passion tension lace
Still tensor 'gainst the sins that gather power and place!

Oh heaven! Oh God! Oh Christ! Must I fail
Again? Must the combat for life belong
To Death? Shall sin and hell conquer? Shall thy mail
Be stripped as trophies? Shall they peel their song
Of victory against thy throne? How long,
How long wilt thou delay? Oh give thy grace
Against the powers that now are rising strong!
Nature's spontanieties rise up and face
My concentrated strength, and with fierceness embrace

Life's final hope! Throne, throne of last despair!
Now help, sustain and succor me, I moan!
This evil heart, this nature vile I bear
Is conqu'ring me? Deniest thou this groan-
ing and immortal hour? Dost thou this strife disown?
Eternal Salvation! Delivering Triune
Of sovereign grace! I supplicate thy throne
Once more. Behold and hasten to commune
With this last desperate need! 'Tis being's battle and soon

The strife is done for Adam's nature vile
Embraces with defeat my mortal will.
Oh God and heav'n! I'm failing. Your denial
More than the foes that gather round doth kill
My final hope. I cannot dream to still
These rising spontanieties of desire.
I fail, I fail! High heaven and the hill
Of vict'ry fails. My hopes like sparks of fire
Are clean extinguished out a strampled down by ire.

But once again, my soul! God or no God
To help, face thou thy foes and battle still!
Back, back ye hell-born hosts! Down, down ye bawd
Abortion demons from this high crested hill!
Man's last and highest hope is his own will.
My single self against the universe
Now breasts and battles with your hosts of ill,
Beats back and down your black begotten curse,
My sworded hands and feet new fierceness now unpurse.

Dare, dare ye still to front me thus and press?
Press on, press on and ride me down to hell!
Rend my frame! Let the sphere contending stress
Return me to the deep, unconscious well
Of being! My soul and all my strength I sell
In desperate strife, but all is spent in vain;
I cannot drive the sin hosts back nor quell
Their insurrections new that on me gain.
Life's highest hopes are gone and sin doth o'er me reign.

Oh heaven, can it be? Is life's last strife
Declining now and spirit in defeat?
Do God and Christ and heaven's hopes of life
Depart the field as if in blind retreat?
'Tis even so. My battle strength and heat
Has called and called as unto faithful friends,
But none responds. Now with resistless feet
The foes of life with passion that distends
Upon me fiercely leap and hope forever ends.

I'm lost! I'm lost! Oh heaven and earth, I'm lost!
My life's last hope and battle has been vain.
The cause the brightest promises embossed
And agonizing prayers have all been slain
In this defeat; nor doth there now remain
A throne or court that never has been crossed
With intercessions of intensest pain.
Demented cries my spirit tempest tossed:
"No hope! No hope! No hope! Lost! Lost! I'm lost! I'm lost!"

Yes, I am lost! My spirit here is lost.
The strife twixt sin and holiness is o'er.
High heav'n's denial annihilates like frost
The spark of life that can awake no more.
Oh whence can now another unknown store
Of hope unseal, when God Himself doth cast
All prayer in scorn from heaven's golden door?
He leaves me here a slave to sin at last,
A hopeless, helpless slave in chains and iron fast.

Has not each source been sought and been unsealed?
Youth's fountain heart with all the strength of dream
And vital hopes that almost drunken reeled
Poured into me the fulness of her stream.
Great nature with victoriousness did beam
The promises her brightest splendor bossed
And rose in me with all the powers that teem
In her own breast, but what a winter frost
Has bitten all these hopes and left me dead and drossed!

Eternity's great countenance so bright,
A Majesty that wakes the universe
To altitudinal passion did alight
On me, and disappointed youth did nurse
Again to once more battle with the curse.
Regirded with the mighty thoughts that crossed
My heart and brain like an immortal verse,
Unto my foes the gauntlet bold I tossed.
After the fight, behold! Oh more than ever lost!

The last hope in the dead, dead heart of man
That has a resurrection is the thought
Of some great God with a redeeming plan
Who breaks the powers of nature as he ought.
That hope divine that did arise was caught
With all desires such circumstance could bart;
But it was vain and for me nothing wrought.
Life's laws are fixed; no power tears them apart;
But what thou art thou art, though slow may change the heart.

When first that angel voice I distant heard
With music deep of free and saving grace,
When first I saw in that oracular word
Soft sympathetic splendors light his face,
A hope divine my spirit did embrace,
As motherhood has clasped her child just dead
And nursed it back to life. I felt the space
Of sin was short, but now I'm lost, for bled
Has hope's last vital heart and God from me has fled.

Now in my sins am I not certain lost?
When he enthroned above eternity
Has left me thus, profane and dark and drossed,
Far, far extreme to all that soul should be—
When the great primal virtue will not see
Such agonizing prayers for help divine—
When he, the all transcendent fountain free
Of life and love denies his heart to mine,
Dare I again to hope that hope shall one me shine?

Yes, I am lost; I feel it in my heart. With life
Corrupt as death and promised hopes high nailed
In scorn, Oh how can mortal dare the strife
And victor be? When the most high has failed,
Who can courageous stand? Or who has scaled
The breasted heights where hosts embattled be?
Who, who denied in prayer has ever hailed
The liberty and morning of the free
And noonday's heights of power and songs of victory?

I'm lost, and lost not as I once was lost;
My soul to life's great truths was once a blank.
The stainless light and awful shades across
This solemn world were merely clouds that prank
The golden morn. The living God, the rank
And majesty of law and life and powers
In exaltation prime beyond this bank
And brief of time—Oh blindest youthful hours,
To live for years as dead to all around thy bowers!

But now this deep above me and around,
Before, behind, but most within my heart,
Is seen and felt. This gross material bound
Is a transparent glass through which doth dart
The ideal dreams and moral powers that chart
The universe. I see myself as drossed
And swept as dregs and refuse of the mart;
Now in the storm my being wild is tossed,
Tossed, driven, struck and stained and cast about as lost.

Yes, I am lost to what I ought to be;
By that bright chart which in my heart is seen,
I should become a fount of purity
Where the all Perfect Soul above could lean
And see some likeness to himself—a green
And growing heart whose motions and desires
In virtue find their heav'n of heav'ns serene;
But here I'm lost to these divine requires
With heart and fountains filled with most accursèd fires.

I'm lost to all for which I was designed.
Oh what an infinite ascending scale
Doth rise within the rich Eternal Mind
For each he brings to birth! Its splendors pale
The brightest dreams that selfishness could hail
To crown her triumph with everlasting fame.
From strength to strength, from life to life doth sail
And soar on eagle wings the golden light we name
And that ideal and more is fed from whence it came.

I'm lost to all, to all for which soul was designed!
For me among the pure and enthroned host
A servant's place no hope can dare to find.
The golden heights of you embattled coast
Scorn to the deep and proud unvanquished boast
A lost archangel power. How then shall one
Of sense and shame, a grief enhaunted ghost,
Dream thence to climb where sinful hearts are none,
But splendored purities like angels in the sun!

I'm lost to that sublime reality
That sweeps before my partial blinded eyes.
The noblest reach of this finality,
Begun on earth and finished in the skies,
Is not for me, although it be the prize
Of this humanity. Here, here within
The chains and prison of myself there lies
A hope that that inheritance would win,
But lost, Oh lost, Oh lost, beneath the power of sin!

Man's noble destiny is certain lost;
Dethroned, denied, rejected and depraved;
Repentance, prayers and agonies back tossed
Upon my soul; imprisoned and enslaved,
Though at the most tremendous price I craved
The boon of liberty. I'm lost in sin
And feel the mark upon my spirit graved
Which sealest those the gulf will certain win.
Oh cursèd, cursèd power! I'm lost without and in!

No! No! There is no hope! Oh never more
Can I arise unto my being's height!
The strife is past and I have done and bore
What none can dream but those who fight and fight
Of sin and holiness. I feel from mountain height
Hot, dark, swift, voluminous streams of pain
Pour on my soul and their tumultuous flight
Through heartless heart and sore and sightless brain
Tell the decree of fate that such I must remain.

The high, almighty, perfect, stainless One,
Beyond the stars, exalted on his throne,
Has cast me off. The soul and sense of sun-
Like fires affirm their purity and doth disown
My sinfulness. His moral splendors thrown
Athwart the universe falls on each soul
And who that light shall never make his own
Shall never reach his being's destined goal
But down through stormy night like driven clouds shall roll.

No portion mine in that immortal life
Which full are glowing as the ages run
Will pour itself in measures rich and rife
Through all high hearts from the Eternal One.
The vast resources of that central sun
Forever climbing to its being's height,
In every age as when it first began
Will crown all souls with splendor and delight;
But this of mine thus lost shall sink through starless night.

My true ideal is lost and full undone!
From being's high and noble destiny
Within the worlds far brighter than the sun
My hierarchal place will vacant be
Among the hosts of enthroned purity.
The very name of one who should have been
Enrobed in dazzling immortality
Shall be forgot in heav'n and all therein
Shall drive the mem'ry down, down, down the night of sin.

Woe, woe is me! I am undone, undone!
From bosom clouds of vast protentious sound
On this lost soul God's holy lightnings run,
Tearing new gash in life's unbandaged wound.
I am encircled in the storms that round
The world and all man's vain profanity.
In these dark, swift, descending powers that hound
Me down from God, I cry: "How can it be
That God should cast his child in this dark destiny!"

Oh God! Oh God! Can it be true! Dost thou
Despise thy child and utterly disown
The birth that once with joy exalting brow
Looked in thy face forgetful of thy throne
And called thee: "Father! Father!" Oh how that tone
Seemed to awake a fatherhood in thee
And thou wert pleased to listen to my moan!
Life rose as founts up from a plumbless sea,
A stream of prayer and praise, sunbright and pure and free.

I thought I then was thy redemption child;
I thought my heart then felt thy saving grace;
I thought my soul to heaven reconciled
And joined to thee and thy celestial race,
For something new my spirit did embrace.
But Oh alas! Alas! I was beguiled
By some deceitful dream that wore the face
Of heav'n or something of life's undefiled
Came then within my heart as comes unto the child.

Warm forth from soul there came youth's noblest vow:
"I will be thine and ever thine alone;
Oh let my life be on thy flaming brow
As is a jewel on kingly crown and throne!"
My very tears, but tears of joy were sown
Upon the hour of prayer and soaring praise.
A something both before and since unknown
Fell on my heart and did my spirit raise
And added glory bright unto the night and days.

A light that seemed more than the morning's mirth
Did shine on me and mingled in my dream.
Blinding all sense of sin and self and earth
From thine own face it seemed a noondy gleam
Outshone the sun's best splendors. A living stream
Of blessing did baptize me as I knelt
Before thy feet and founts of life did seem
Within my heart. Time's heavy clouds did melt
And summer's tropic sense within my soul was felt.

But now I know that crimson joy was not
From thee; that golden light was not thy face
Of splendor pure, and love so swift and hot
Was not from thy great heart. That dream-like grace
Might rise as spirit opened to embrace
The larger world; but Oh I fear, I fear
The powers of night were round the hour and place
And threw some dreams upon my crescent sphere,
As sometimes spirits dark like heaven's dreams appear.

'Twas not from thee! 'Twas not from thee! That hour
Was not from thee, that now in anger turns
And raineth down the judgments that devour!
It could not be thy fatherhood unlearns
Its godlike grace and its begotten spurns
Forth from its heart and sight. No fatherhood
In heav'n begot me then and now none years
Upon me with compassion kind and good.
I stand beneath the wrath no granite strength e'er stood.

Within the book paged in his father heart
And written with the life blood of the Son
Another name for me was never writ
As of a soul redeemed and ever won.
Upon that page Christ's blood did never run
For me, nor have I any sign or part
In Calvary where grace was first begun.
Cast off Cast off from God's eternal heart
And hearing, hearing oft: "Depart! Depart! Depart!"

I am accursed! I'm sealed as with a sign!
My heart and mind are fountains full of sin;
My will is bound unto the undivine,
And all without but far more all within
Make me to be as in the past have been.
I am accursed, one of the accursed race
Devoted to extremes; a soul akin
To great examples; I now must onward pace
To my own final place, to my own final place.

"To my own place!" What awful futures press
Sheer through the word and what fate emphasis
In its related scriptures! They express
The judgments close and prophesy the abyss
Of night. Heav'n's eternal thrones dismiss
The court and hurl their sentence in my face.
Swift driven blind by powers that howl and hiss
I hear a voice that doth my soul embrace:
"To my own final place!" "To my own final place!"

"To my own place!" Where is this final place?
In night's dominions unpeopled since creation
And dressed as meet for such accursed race
There must be where they live in separation.
There, where the skies rain fiery condemnation,
Where earth is blasted as blasted are life's dreams,
Where all things are an evil incarnation,
Where self is ripe and sin within them teems,
Where heaven's judgments storm and mighty wrath unstreams.

This is my place, my fixed and final place!"
Oh what a dream to crush my sinking brain!
What awful doom my spirit will embrace
When death shall strike the soul and sense in twain!
Soon, soon the powers that now the deed restrain
Shall stay no more the sword upon my face
And I shall go but curse and brand and pain
Already bear me downward to my place,
Where hells of hopelessness shall deeper hells embrace.

Oh what a heritage of dark embittered thought!
Oh what a weight upon my soul doth be!
Oh what a world is by my conscience brought
And held up straight for sin and guilt to see
And flash the fate the future holds for me!
Convulsing heart and mind earthquakes and great
Volcanic tempests shake my soul and free
Gigantic forms of fear, remorse and fate
Out of eternal night forever on my state!

"Forever! Forever!" Oh what a word
To sound upon this lost humanity
That never yet in all her hist'ry heard
Such doom voice in the darkness! A bell must be
As large as this black hemisphere I see
And infinitely high; its awful toll
Sounds through the universe and setteth free
The judgment's final sentences that roll
From far and cloudy heights like last dooms on my soul.

"Forever! Forever!" What thoughtless thought
Is riding on and wrapped up in that sound!
No images now to the eyes are brought
As blank they stare into the darkness round.
A dark paralysis of mind has bound
The faculties of dream. Nought, nought, Oh nought
Doth rise before the soul! An awe profound
And most unconscious consciousness has caught
And holds my list'ning soul, pale, motionless and taut.

That world-outweighing word again is heard;
It swift dissolves the mind's paralysis
And every power unto its deep is stirred
With images from out the black abyss.
"Forever!" Hark! "Forever!" It images
The first and last and black tempestuousness
That falls upon the world. That howl and hiss
Around the soul torn in the rending stress
Is like a winter storm round soul devoid of dress.

This thought is like a hungry serpent vast
From deepest deep of night's unsounded sea,
Up it doth rise, the sinner it has clasped,
Coiling its coil around this fated me.
Oh damnable, damnable monstrosity!
Most horrible of hell's abortions! Oh thing
Of infinite repulsion! What agony
Convulsive and insanities upspring!
But forever, oh forever, forever it will sling!

it rises up; it fills the night and day;
Oft at its sight convulsion seizes me;
My heart is gnawed; my spirit is its prey;
And from my sleep I sudden start and see
The beast. But Oh! To all eternity
Through dark infernal pits and vast distress
And undreamed woes of evil destiny
Will she drag through, but this "foreverness"
Is that most dreaded thing that does the future dress.

Oh what a fate for all eternity!
The vast immensities of time and space
Seem populated by a dark maternity
Of blight, and her malign and blasting race
The guilty there await and swift embrace
In their infernal beings. My spirit fears
Life's bound'ries dark but must the future face.
I front a high infinity of spheres
But each one darker feeds the dark and lampless years.

How short is time! How long eternity!
How but a spark is hist'ry in its flight!
Yon golden suns and stars that vaster be
Shall all be quenched and their effulgence bright
To cinders turn. While God himself shall light
The universe my soul and sinful heart
Must dwell afar in hell's black stormy night,
From God and heav'n and all good far apart;
But worse, Oh worst of all! "Forever" as thou art!

Oh must it be "forever and forever?"
Shall vast aeonic ages without cease
Roll over me and shall my spirit never
With lapse of time from sin find a release?
Shall circles vast forevermore increase
With changes more than those the past has bred
And this lost soul nor have nor dream of peace?
What spirit strong though passions grand it fed
Could bear such awful thoughts with proud erected head?

Eternity! Eternity! Oh thought
That sin makes dread, most dreadful to behold!
Thou burdenest as if there had been brought
Vast mountain weights and on my weakness rolled.
Cast by omnipotence what spirit bold
Dare hear or think a such tremendous curse?
Then how shall soul that all sin-germs enfold
Not think but bear and bearing still more nurse
To all eternity the wrath God doth unpurse?

Ten thousand dreams of crimson suicide
From these mad thoughts have sprung upon my brain.
The spirits dark forever at my side
At times impel almost beyond restrain.
Oh Self, Oh Sin, Oh Curse, Remorse and Pain!
Ye drive and drive to black insanity
And mind is lost in thy delirious train!
Ye quicker hurl than fate or need may be
My horror haunted soul in thy more haunted sea!

Fears, fears, gigantic shadows of the universe,
Impassioned thrice, omnipotent, malign,
Incarnations of the eternal curse
Oft torture soul as with hell's dark design.
My mortal frame is stagg'ring with the wine
That Life pours out into my reeling brain.
I'm going mad as mighty fears more twine
Around me. Merciful God, upon me rain
Thy lightning striking fire ere I should go insane!

Insane! Insane! Sin driven, mad insane!
Great blasphemies out of my battles rise!
The in- and out-environments constrain
Forth from the soul these torture burdened sighs:
"What right have these vast powers that energize
The universe to make man so profane
That this low self the higher self defies?
What right, what right . . . " Unconscious grows my brain!
The conflicts of the soul are driving soul insane.

The way to death is but a steep decline,
Rich pranked with all the senses can invite;
Flowers, music, song, pleasure and dance and wine,
Throngs, throngs and throngs all drunken with delight.
The path to life is up a beetling height
That doth despise, hurls back and oft has slain
The travailing soul that crieth for the right.
This sense and soul, this death and life, the twain,
The one rots down the deep, the other goes insane.

Oh how I wish I never had been born!
Oh were for me no place in primal mind!
Oh that no power from thought had ever torn
My soul to life of such accursèd kind!
Oh would my soul had ever been divined
Within the realms of high eternal thought
Where things remain, pure, bright and kingly signed!
What spirit's boundless curse that being caught
And dragged it into life and after round it wrought?

Oh had I died when but a cradled child
Or had some angel gently kissed my lips
And stole my soul when white and undefiled!
Oh had the early frost that cruelly clips
The fairest flowers and most remorseless strips
The mother's tender buds, in my first hour
Cast over me its deadly cold eclipse!
When it was near, why did my mother shower
Her tear prevailing prayers before the thrônes of power?

Oh would my mortal lot had been consigned
To some ungospelled portion of the world!
In Africa my spirit had been blind
But never as where light is full unfurled,
Been dowered with a curse and down been whirled
By vengeful storms. I'd bart this high impress
For those low forms that wrath has never hurled;
I would of God and purity seen less,
Been not or lightly judged nor burdened with distress.

I cannot rest but when I am asleep,
And even it is oft disturbed by dreams;
But were it not, I'd wish to bathe me deep
For aye 'neath waves of her still flowing streams.
Hope is so dead, the heav'n of heav'n now seems
To draw forever sleep's unconscious breath
And still the powers with which my being teems.
If hope revives her murmur only saith:
"I trust eternity ne'er wakes the sleep of death."

Could I but find where streams oblivion run,
Of such deep strength all things are soon forgot,
And memory's dreams since life has first begun
Would be washed out with every guilty blot,
How I would haste, and in my pantings hot
Upon its brink one moment I would stay;
The next my spirit I would plunge and not
From hence remove but let those waters play
Around my hopeless heart each hour of night and day.

Oh were there found some costly mystic bowl
Whose mingled draught souls would annihilate,
That I would seek and buy although my soul
Were its high price; then praying loud no mate
Might fill the place made vacant by my fate,
With calm and peace upon the awful brink
Of nothingness, my being's whole estate
By one deep draught, down, down the gulf would sink
Where life and heart and mind no more can feel or think.

What is the cause of this eternal strife?
Whence is the source of life's unwished bestow?
Reveal to me the secret of this life
That with ripe hells so rage and overflow!
My all to him who will this mystery show!
My finger then, though nervous it might be,
But firm resolved all being to forego,
Would touch the springs and from myself be free
With one short piercing cry of electric agony.

